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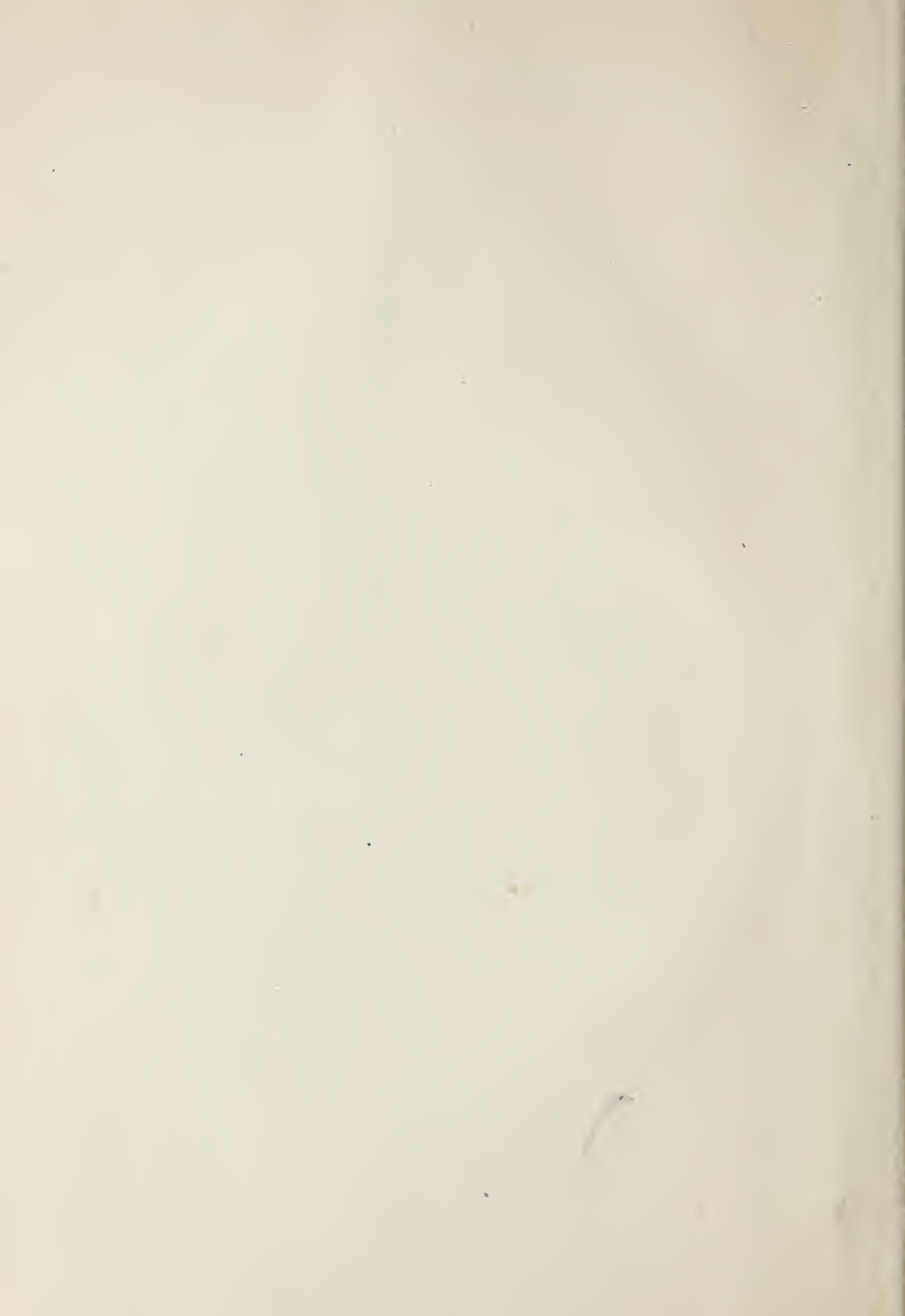
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A  
HISTORY OF NORWICH  
VERMONT

(Published by Authority of the Town)

WITH PORTRAITS AND ILLUSTRATIONS

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M. E. GODDARD  
HENRY V. PARTRIDGE

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HANOVER, N. H.  
THE DARTMOUTH PRESS  
1905

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BY HENRY V. PARTRIDGE

## PREFACE

7-50  
In presenting this history to the public, I will state that at the request of a number of our people, and after formal action on the subject by the voters of the town in town meeting, I reluctantly consented to play the role of a historian by carrying forward a task left unfinished by the decease of our highly esteemed fellow townsman, the late M. E. Goddard, whose scholarly attainments and deep interest in the subject eminently fitted him for preparing this work.

In the preparation of this pen picture of our town I have used the material prepared by my predecessor in the undertaking, and such other matter as the limited time at my control has enabled me to secure, striving, at the time, to present a correct, though not graphic, presentation of the subject.

In these pages the reader thereof will find the history of our Norwich from the time of the first meeting of the grantees of this newly granted township, held at the house of William Waterman, innkeeper, at Mansfield, Conn., in the summer of 1761, and within a little more than a month subsequent to the signing of the town's charter by the royal governor of the Province of New Hampshire; and the onward developing factors that were to crystallize into a well organized community; as, also, sketches of some of the families who early settled in town, and of individuals whose career in life added lustre to their home town, and warrants mention of them in this work; with illustrations of persons and places, and incidents of varied character in the town's life.

Circumstances have forced me to reduce, somewhat, from what I had previously intended, the contents of this history, by leaving unpublished some material already prepared for the work. Although the absence of that matter may detract somewhat from the interest of the work, it will not materially reduce its worth, historically.

In conclusion I will express a hope that this story—though a tale not well told in all its parts—may be both instructive and interesting to its readers, and that their mantle of charity may overcast the defects that may appear in the form of its presentation.

H. V. P.

Norwich, Vermont,  
October, 1905.



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PART I  
HISTORICAL



## CHAPTER I

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### NORWICH AN INDEPENDENT TOWNSHIP

A. D. 1761-1782

"Town meetings are to liberty what primary schools are to science: they bring it within the people's reach; they teach men how to use and how to enjoy it."

*De Tocqueville.*

In America the germ of political organization is the Township—older than the County, older than the State. In New England we find towns established as independent communities, endowed with distinctive rights and privileges, as early as the middle of the seventeenth century.

It is to these town governments that we must look for the foundation of republican liberty—to the town meeting, where all citizens meet on a plane of equality to choose their local officers and manage their local affairs. Here is the firm basis upon which all free institutions can rest.

Ralph Waldo Emerson once proposed that the records of a New England town should be printed and presented to the governments of Europe—to the English nation as a thank-offering and as a certificate of the progress of the Saxon race; to the continental nations as a lesson of humanity and love.

De Tocqueville said that the government of a New England township was the best specimen of a pure democracy that the world has ever seen.

The town charters granted by New Hampshire conferred upon *the inhabitants* of each township, from its first organization, the right of self government in town meeting, by the election of town officers and general direction of town affairs.

Such, also, had long been the practice in Connecticut, from whence a large proportion of all the early settlers had emigrated to their new homes in the New Hampshire Grants.

The royal decision of July 20, 1764, which extended the boundary of New York to the west bank of the Connecticut River, soon resulted in the practical relinquishment by New Hampshire of all claims to jurisdiction over these infant settlements. New York never succeeded in establishing her authority over them, and the people were thus left for nearly twenty years solely to the town meeting and the officers therein chosen for the protection of life and liberty, as well as for the management of their local affairs.

It is a curious fact in the history of Norwich that the town was organized and officered before it contained a single inhabitant, and before the first white man had entered it for the purpose of settlement. It illustrates the aptitude of our ancestors for self government, and their dependence on law and order as a necessary basis for civil society.

The first town meeting was held at Mansfield, Conn., on the same day (August 26, 1761) on which the proprietors of the town met and organized for business, and was composed, beyond doubt, of the same persons. The following is its brief record:—

“At a Town Meeting of the Grantees of Norwich held on Wednesday ye 26 Day of August 1761 at the House of M<sup>r</sup> Will<sup>m</sup> Waterman in Mansfield—Eliezar Wales being moderator of s<sup>d</sup> meeting—

“1 Voted that Eliezar Wales should be Town Clerk for the Current year—

“2 Voted Sam<sup>l</sup> West Capt Abner Barker Major Joseph Stores Select Men for the Current year—

“3 Voted Andrew Crocker Constable—

“6 Voted that the next anuel town meeting should be held at the dwelling House of Mr. W<sup>m</sup> Waterman.”

From the date of this meeting the records of the town are continuous and unbroken to the present time, except that there are no records of *freemen's meeting* preserved prior to the year 1794. It is thought that there are few towns in the State whose official records are more complete or in better condition. Previous to 1778 these are not original entries, however, but the records of preceding years were

transcribed and compiled (from loose sheets, probably,) by Abel Curtis, then town clerk, in a clear, bold handwriting, into a large folio volume given to the town by Captain Elisha Burton for that purpose. The annual town meeting in Norwich was generally held on the second Tuesday of March—sometimes still later in the month—in conformity to the custom in New Hampshire, the parent state, until about 1847, when the time was changed to the *first Tuesday*, as is now the universal practice in Vermont.

Town meetings continued to be holden at the house of Wm. Waterman in Mansfield, annually, for the choice of officers, until 1768, when the first town meeting within the town of Norwich was held at the house of Joseph Hatch, on the second Tuesday of March. At this meeting, in addition to the officers mentioned in the record above, Elisha Partridge was chosen tithingman, and Peter Thatcher, Hezekiah Johnson, Thomas Murdock, and Jacob Burton, fence viewers. Nathan Messenger acted as moderator and Thomas Murdock as clerk. Medad Benton was chosen constable, an office that he held both the preceding and following years. In 1769, John Hatch was elected town clerk, and was re-elected each year till 1780, with the exception of the year 1774, when Peter Olcott was chosen.

Town meetings were held at the house of Joseph Hatch from 1768 to 1774; in the latter year and up to 1780 at the house of Peter Olcott. On the 20th of April, 1780, town meeting was convened for the first time at the meeting house—then in an unfinished condition—and from that time forward all town meetings were regularly held there for more than sixty years. As there was no provision for warming this house, stoves not having yet come into use, the annual March meeting, and special meetings held in winter, were sometimes adjourned to a neighboring dwelling house, usually to Colonel Olcott's, to Abel Curtis', or Lieutenant Roswell Morgan's. After 1846 town and freemen's meetings were held at the church on Norwich Plain for a term of ten years, after which they went back to the old meeting house at the Center again for two or three years. Town meeting was held for the first time at Union Hall, March 20, 1855, but freemen's meetings were continued at the Center meeting house\* till 1858.

Additions to the short list of officers were made from year to year as the interests of the town were found to require, until prior to the

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\*This building was sold to C. A. and G. M. Slack for \$150.00, and removed.

Revolution nearly a full board of town officers, as now required, was annually chosen. In 1770 Hezekiah Johnson was chosen the first treasurer of the town and John Wright collector, although it does not appear that any town tax was voted until 1772. The first board of assessors (Phillip Smith, John Slafter, and John Sargent) was elected the same year, and likewise three overseers of the poor (Peter Thatcher, Aaron Wright, and Daniel Baldwin), thus showing that the poor, even in the newest settlements, are ever with us. One of the first necessities of a newly-settled country is good roads, or at least, such roads as render communication and travel possible. The construction of these will always impose a severe tax upon the first settlers. The proprietors of Norwich, as we have seen, had already made some small beginnings in this direction, but the burden of that work was henceforth to rest upon the inhabitants of the town to carry forward as they should find themselves able. At the annual March meeting in 1769, Hezekiah Johnson, Jacob Burton, Samuel Partridge, Nathan Messenger, and John Hatch, were chosen a committee "to lay out highways where they shall think needful."

In July, 1770, this committee made a report at a special town meeting. The proceedings of this meeting are copied entire below, as they show the action of the town on the committee's report as well as the location of some of the first roads opened to travel in town:

"At a Town meeting held at the house of Joseph Hatch in Norwich, July the 9th, 1770—

"1 Voted Mr Peter Thatcher moderator, John Hatch clerk.

"2 Voted to accept the doings of Commite that was chose by the propriety to lay out H Ws.

"3 Voted to accept the alteration of the H W at pompanosuc.

"4 Voted to accept of the alteration of the H W by Joseph Smalleys.

"5 Voted that the alterations of the H W at Girl Island Brook\* are received and accepted.

"6 Voted that the alterations of the H W that goes through Mr Baldwins Land are accepted.

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\*Supposed to be the brook which empties into the Connecticut near Mr. Samuel Hutchinson's, since known as Johnson's Brook. The tradition is that a young girl was lost or left on the island in the river near the mouth of this brook, from a party of settlers pursuing their journey on the river in the earliest times. Among the old families the island still bears the name above given.



"7 Voted that the H W that is laid from Hartford line to the Sawmill and to the H W that goes by Elisha Burtons are received and accepted.

"8 Voted to lay out a H W on the top of the hill above Mr Watermans to Joseph Smalleys—"

The "H. W." referred to in vote seven above, ran very nearly with the present road from the fork in the highway north of H. S. Goddard's to C. Bond's, and from thence easterly to the corner of the main street of Norwich village at S. A. Armstrong's (then Elisha Burton's). A road from the ferry then in use at the present site of the Hanover Bridge, past Captain Burton's to the site of the old corner store in Norwich village, burned in 1875, had previously been laid by the Proprietors' Committee. The first road placed on record as laid by the selectmen of the town connected the ferry with the grist mill on Blood Brook, already referred to as built by Joseph Hatch and Oliver Babcock. This road was located in 1768, nearly as the road now runs to the present mill. The following year a road was surveyed, "starting at a white pine tree," where the old corner store afterwards stood, and running two and one-fourth miles northwest towards Sharon. The course of this road was first west on the present road to A. G. Knapp's mill (where a grist mill was erected soon after by Elisha Burton), then crossing to the west side of Blood Brook it passed in a northerly direction, near an old barn now standing in Mrs. Dutton's meadow, up the hill past Deacon John Dutton's and the Crandall farm direct to D. H. Bragg's, and from thence continued in a northwest course on substantially the present highway to Jonas Richards' (now, 1888, Chas. E. Cloud's). In 1779, a four-rod highway was laid direct from the ferry to the first meeting house, then building on the hill (near Henry Goddard's). This highway, familiarly known as "the road from the meeting house to the college," followed an existing road as far as Joseph Hatch's (Messenger house), thence ran 183 rods on the present main street of the village to a ledge just north of the upper schoolhouse, on a course one degree west of due north by the compass; and thence on to the meeting house much as the road now runs. The distance by the survey from Captain Hatch's dwelling house to the meeting house was 582 rods or 1.82 miles, nearly. This highway was continued through the town to Thetford line the

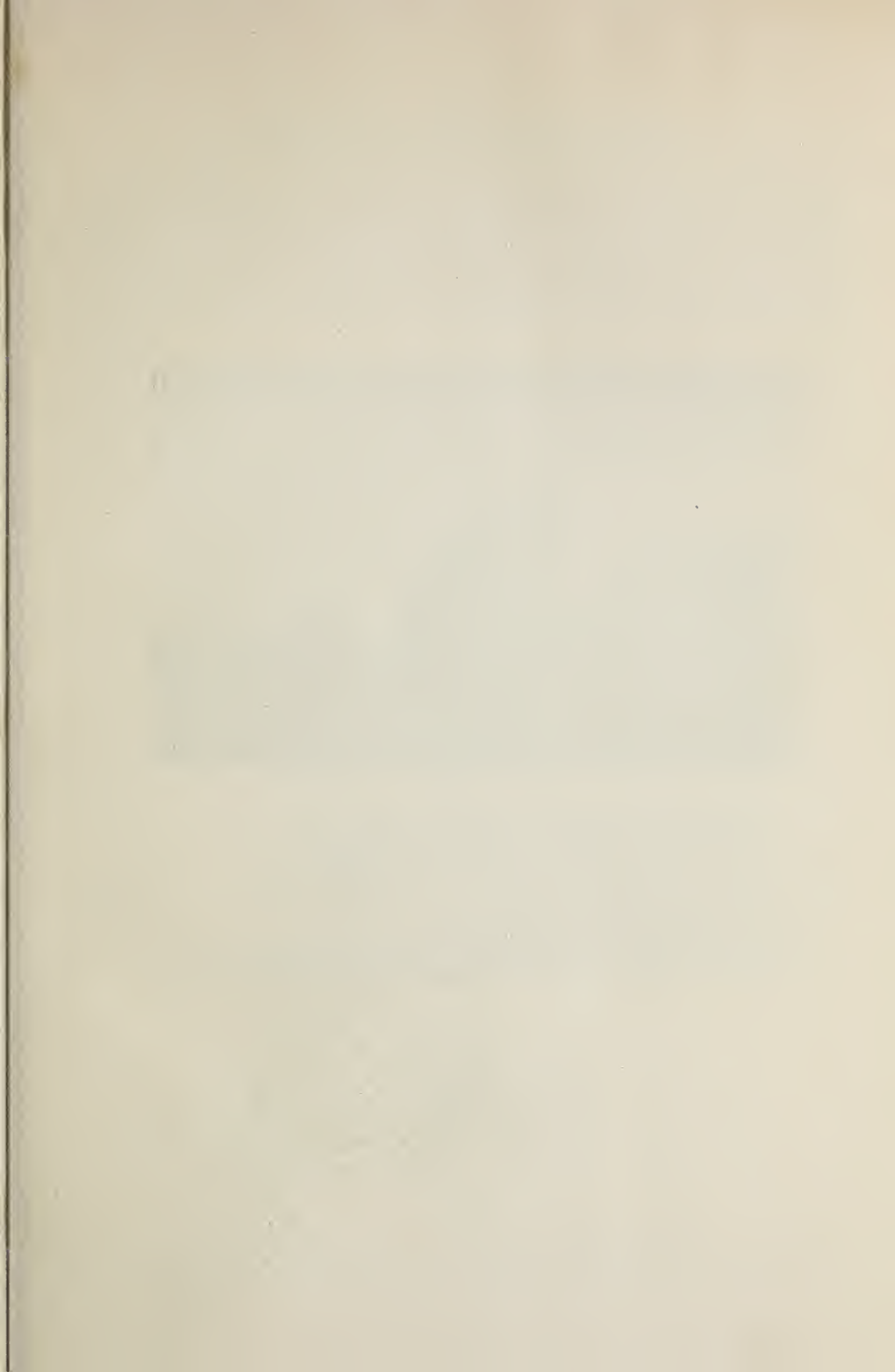
same year, on about the site of the present road to Union Village, entering Thetford "1/4 mile N. E. of John Rogers' house, and about six rods from Umpompanoosuc river."

From the meeting house as a center, roads were projected during the years immediately following to all parts of the town. Many of these were at first, and for some time after their construction, mere bridle paths or cart tracks, which just sufficed for travelers to get through the woods on horseback, or with an ox-cart in summer and a sled in winter.

The need of a bridge over Umpompanoosuc River was early felt by the town. At the annual March meeting in 1771, it was voted to build a bridge at the expense of the town, and Captain Hezekiah Johnson, Daniel Waterman, and Peter Thatcher were chosen a committee "to view the place to build s<sup>d</sup> bridge and oversee s<sup>d</sup> business." The location of this bridge, if ever built, is somewhat uncertain. No further reference to it is to be found on the town records for more than ten years, when (March, 1782) it was again voted in town meeting, "to build a bridge at some convenient place as the situation will admit near Hezekiah Johnson's"—the site of the present lower bridge across Pompa River. It was also voted "to build s<sup>d</sup> bridge the present year," and a land tax of one penny per acre on all lands in town voted "to defray the expense." Deacon John Slafter, Daniel Waterman, Jr., and Captain Timothy Bush were made a committee "to effect the building of s<sup>d</sup> bridge." This second bridge seems also to have disappeared not long after, as the town again voted, in April, 1787, "to build a bridge over Umpompanoosuc river near the mouth, opposite Capt. Johnson's." A tax for this purpose had been granted by the Vermont Assembly the October previous, and the expense of construction was probably shared with adjoining towns. A fuller account of the building of important roads and bridges in town, with special reference to the several bridges on the Connecticut, connecting Norwich and Hanover, will be attempted further on in this sketch. Matters of more general concern and wider interest will now claim our attention for a time.

As we have already seen, Norwich virtually had its origin in the colony of Connecticut in the year 1761.







- 1 Blacksmith shop erected by Elihu Emerson
- 2 Formerly store building, now E. W. Olds' residence
- 3 Formerly residence of Elihu Emerson, now Wm. Bicknell's
- 4 H. Lary's residence, built by Joseph Emerson for a shop
- 5 Mrs. C. P. Newton's residence, originally Joseph Emerson's
- 6 Miss M. J. Davis' residence, originally a store building
- 7 Sawyer's harness shop, removed
- 7 1-2 C. E. Ensworth's residence, formerly Judge A. Loveland's
- 8 Mrs. Wheelock's school building, removed
- 8 1-2 H. Russ' residence, formerly Union Store, etc.
- 9 Mrs. S. H. Currier's residence, formerly Capt. Aaron Partridge's
- 10 Mrs. S. P. Benham, previously Gen. Ransom, earlier Judge Thomas Emerson

MAIN STREET, NORWICH VILLAGE, YEARS SINCE

On the 26th day of August of that year, at the house of William Waterman, inn-holder, in the town of Mansfield, in said colony, were convened the proprietors or grantees of a newly granted township of land situated 150 miles away to the northward, in a wilderness country then just beginning to be known as the "New Hampshire Grants."

These men were assembled to decide upon the first steps to be taken to open up to settlement and improvement a tract of forest six miles square located on the west bank of Connecticut River forty miles north of Charlestown (Number Four), then the farthest outpost of civilization in the upper valley of that river.

At the time of which we are speaking all that portion of the present state of New Hampshire lying west of the intervalles of the Merrimac in the vicinity of Concord was entirely uninhabited, and lay in the primitive wildness of nature. A few townships along that river above Concord had been surveyed and located, and thither a few resolute pioneers had already penetrated—among them Captain Ebenezer Webster, the father of the future expounder of the Constitution, whose cabin was at one time, it is said, nearer the north star than that of any other New Englander. But beyond a narrow fringe of settlements along the Merrimac, the whole of western New Hampshire north of Keene was alike covered by primitive forests and untouched by the hand of man. To the westward of the Connecticut, as far as the military posts of Ticonderoga and Crown Point on Lake Champlain, and northward to the valley of the St. Lawrence, lay one unbroken, trackless wilderness, unoccupied by a human habitation and traversed only by a few roving bands of Canadian Indians or by an occasional hunting party of white men from the older settlements of New England.

It was into surroundings such as these that the founders of Norwich thought to plant a town. Many conditions of the time, however, were favorable for leading out new colonies from the ever prolific New England hive. The long French and Indian War had finally ended in the complete conquest of Canada in the preceding year. Peace had now come, bringing security to the border settlements, harassed and terrorized by fear of hostile incursions from Canada for a long time. For nearly a generation the older settled districts of the New England colonies had extended their borders, but slowly and painfully,

into the surrounding wilderness. With the reduction of Canada to English rule in 1760, a repressed and redundant population hastened to overflow existing bounds, and the instinct for emigration, always strong in the Anglo-Saxon blood, became irrepressible for expansion into new lands.

It was to prepare the way for such a migration that the proprietors of Norwich were assembled at the Waterman tavern in Mansfield, on the 26th of August, 1761, as we have already seen. They had received their charter on the fourth day of the preceding July, from the hand of Benning Wentworth, the royal governor of the Province of New Hampshire, within whose territory the new township was understood to lie. The neighboring towns of Hartford on the south and Hanover and Lebanon on the east bank of the Connecticut River, received their charters from Governor Wentworth on the same day with Norwich, and the proprietors of those towns met at the same time (Aug. 26, 1761) to arrange the business of preparation for the settlement of their respective locations\*.

Like the proprietors of Norwich, they were mostly residents of a small district of country lying along the Thames and its affluents, the Shetucket and Willimantic Rivers in Eastern Connecticut. It appears that early in the year 1761 a petition had been circulated in that part of Connecticut and extensively signed, asking His Excellency the Governor of New Hampshire for a grant of four townships of land, "at a place known as Cohorse" (Coos), meaning the Lower Oxbow of the Connecticut River where the towns of Newbury and Bradford, Vt., and Haverhill and Piermont, N. H., now are, a locality even then known to be desirable to the settler as having the advantage of containing a strip of cleared intervalle along the river, which had previously been occupied and cultivated—in the Indian fashion—by a small body of Indians of the St. Francis tribe. Colonel Edmund Freeman and Joseph Storrs of Mansfield were the agents of the syndicate to carry the petition to Portsmouth, then the seat of the provincial government of New Hampshire. Unsuccessful for some reason in securing the coveted location "at the Cohorse," they succeeded in obtaining charters for four townships some twenty-five miles further south, adjacent to each other and lying on opposite sides of Con-

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\*The Hartford proprietors met at Windham and the Lebanon at Charlestown.

necticut River. The close associations of these four towns, at the very beginning of their municipal life, was maintained for more than twenty years afterwards, and should be borne in mind by the reader, as it serves to explain some interesting events in their subsequent history.

The proprietors of Norwich organized at Mansfield, as we have seen, on the day provided in their charter. The terms and conditions of this document were the same with those of other Vermont towns chartered by Governor Wentworth. Among the most important of these conditions was the stipulation, that each proprietor or grantee should, within the term of five years, plant and cultivate five acres of land for each fifty acres contained in his share or proportion of land in said township, and continue to improve and settle the same, on penalty of forfeiture of his interest in the township lands. The usual reservations were made in the charter for educational and religious purposes, *viz.*: one share for the benefit of a school in town, one share for the first settled minister, one for a glebe for the Church of England, and one for the Society for the Propagation of the Gospel in Foreign Parts, His Excellency the Governor not forgetting to reserve for himself the customary 500 acres or two shares, as was his invariable rule in granting each new township. This 500 acres, in the case of Norwich, was located in a body at the north-east corner of the town and includes some of the best farming land in town.



“NORWHICH.

{ L. S. }

“PROVINCE OF NEW HAMPSHIRE

“George the Third by the Grace of God, of Great Britain, France and Ireland, King, Defender of the Faith, etc.

To all Persons to whom these Presents shall come, greating—Know ye, that We of our special grace, certain knowledge and mere motion, for the due encouragement of settling a new plantation within our said Province, by and with the advice of our trusty and well-beloved Benning Wentworth, Esq., our Governor and Commander in Chief of our said Province of New Hampshire, in New England, and of our council of said Province, have upon the conditions and reservations hereinafter made, given and granted, and by these presents, for us, our heirs and successors, do give and grant in equal shares, unto our loving subjects, inhabitants of our said Province of New Hampshire and our other Governments, and to their heirs and assigns forever, whose names are entered in this Grant, to be divided to and amongst them into *sixty nine* equal shares, all that tract or parcel of land situate, lying and being within our said Province of New Hampshire, containing by admeasurement, *twenty three thousand* acres, which tract is to contain *six* miles square, and no more, out of which an allowance is to be made for highways and unimproveable lands by rocks, ponds, mountains and rivers, one thousand and forty acres free, according to a plan and survey thereof, made by our said Governor’s order, returned into the Secretary’s office, and hereunto annexed, butted and bounded as follows, viz :

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“Beginning at a Hemlock tree marked with the figures 5 and six that stand on the bank of the Connecticut river just at the head of White River falls and is opposite to the North-west corner of Lebanon, from thence North Sixty Degrees West six miles, from thence North forty-five degrees East six miles, from thence South Sixty degrees East seven miles to an elm tree marked with the figures 6 & 7, from thence down the river to the first bounds mentioned.

“And that the same be and hereby is incorporated into a Township by the name of *Norwich*. That the inhabitants that do or shall hereafter inhabit the said Township, are hereby declared to be enfranchised with and entitled to all and every the privileges and immunities that other towns within our Province by law exercise and enjoy: And further, that the said town as soon as there shall be fifty families resident and settled thereon, shall have the liberty of holding two Fairs, one of which shall be on the ——— and the other on the ——— annually, which Fairs are not to continue longer than the respective ——— following the said ——— and that as soon as the said town shall consist of fifty families, a market may be opened and kept one or more days in each week, as may be thought most advantageous to the inhabitants. Also, that the first meeting for the choice of Town officers, agreeable to the laws of our said Province, shall be held on the *last Wednesday of August next* which said meeting shall be notified by *Mr. Eleazer Wales* who is hereby also appointed the Moderator of the said meeting, which he is to notify and govern agreeably to the laws and customs of said Province and the annual meeting for ever hereafter for the choice of such officers for the said Town shall be on the *Second Tuesday* of March annually, to Have and to Hold the said tract of land as above expressed, together with all privileges and appertenances, to them and their respective heirs and assigns forever, upon the following conditions, viz—

“1st, That every Grantee, his heirs and assigns shall plant and cultivate five acres of land within the term of five years for every fifty acres contained in his or their share or proportion of land in said Township, and continue to improve and settle the same by additional cultivation, on penalty of the forfeiture of his grant or share in the said Township, and of its reverting to us, our heirs and successors, to be by us or them regranted to such of our subjects as shall effectually settle and cultivate the same.

“2d, That all white and other pine trees within the said Township, fit for masting our Royal Navy, be carefully preserved for that use, and none to be cut or felled without our special licence for so doing first had and obtained, upon the penalty of the forfeiture of the right of such grantee, his heirs and assigns, to us, our heirs and

successors as well as being subject to the penalty of any act or acts of parliament that now are or hereafter shall be enacted.

“3. That before any division of the land be made to and among the Grantees, a tract of land as near the centre of the said Township as the land will admit of, shall be reserved and marked out for Town Lots, one of which shall be allotted to each Grantee of the contents of one acre.

“4. Yielding and paying therefor to us, our heirs and successors for the space of ten years, to be computed from the date hereof, the rent of one ear of Indian corn only, on the *twenty fifth day of December* annually, if lawfully demanded, the first payment to be made on the 25<sup>th</sup> of Dec<sup>r</sup> 1762.

“5. Every proprietor, settler or inhabitant, shall yield and pay unto us, our heirs and successors yearly, and every year forever, from and after the expiration of ten years, from the above-said *twenty fifth day of December* namely, *on the twenty fifth day of December* which will be in the year of our Lord 1772—one shilling proclamation money for every one hundred acres he so owns, settles or possesses, and so in proportion for a greater or lesser tract of the said land: which money shall be paid by the respective persons above-said, their heirs or assigns, in our Council Chamber in Portsmouth, or to such Officer or Officers as shall be appointed to receive the same; and this to be in lieu of all other rents and services whatever.

“In Testimony whereof, We have caused the Seal of our Said Province to be hereunto affixed.”

“Witness *Benning Wentworth*, Esq. our Governor and Commander in Chief of our said Province the *fourth* day of July in the year of our Lord Christ, One Thousand, Seven Hundred and *Sixty one* and in the *First* year of our Reign.

“By his Excellency’s command,

B. WENTWORTH.

“With advice of Council,

“THEODORE ATKINSON, Secy.

“Province of New Hamp<sup>re</sup> July 5, 1761

“Recorded according the original

“Charter under the Province Seal.

“Attest<sup>r</sup> THEODORE ATKINSON, Sec,”



## "THE NAMES OF THE GRANTEES OF NORWHICH."

Eleaz <sup>r</sup> Wales	Nathall Harriman
Daniel Welch	Samuel Long
Abner Barker	Ebenez <sup>r</sup> Smith
Ebenez <sup>r</sup> Wales	John Johnson
Ebenez <sup>r</sup> Heath	Thomas Welch
William Johnson ye3 <sup>d</sup>	Joseph Storrs
Gideon Noble	Samuel Cobb
James West	Judah Heath
Daniel Baldwin	James Russell
Calvin Topliff	Hezekiah Johnson
Samuel Johnson	Jonathan Hatch
Elisha Wales	Samuel Slafter
Seth Wales	Benja Whitney
Amos Fellows	James Bicknell
Jedidiah Printon	Jacob Fenton
John Fowler	Moses Barnard
Nathan Strong	Aleaz <sup>r</sup> West
Robert Turner	Andrew Crocker
William Johnson	Eliphas Hunt
Samuel Root	Stephen Palmer
Solomon Wales	Eleaz <sup>r</sup> Warner
Joseph Blanchard	Abijah Learned
Josiah Root	The Hon. Theod <sup>r</sup> Atkinson Esq.
Adoniram Grant	Richard Wilbird Esq.
George Swain	Henry Sherburne Esq.
Samuel Root jun <sup>r</sup>	Mr. Andrew Clarkson
Benja Jennings	Clement March Esq.
Moses Holmes	John Shackford
Benja Shepard	Mesheck Weare Esq.
Elisha Carpenter	Rev. Mr. Samuel Havem
Lemuel Holmes	& Peter Gilman Esq.
Abner Barker Jr.	

"One whole share for the Society for propagating the Gospel in foreign parts. One whole share for a Glebe for the Church of England as by law established, one share for the first settled Minister. One share for the benefit of a school in said Town. His Excellency Benning Wentworth Esq. five hundred acres to be laid as marked in plan B. W. and is to be accounted two of the within shares.

"Province of New Hampshire July 5<sup>th</sup> 1761. Recorded from the

back of the original Charter of Norwichee under the Province Seal.

“Attest<sup>r</sup> THEODORE ATKINSON, Sec<sup>y</sup>”

The larger part of the above are names of Connecticut men then resident in Mansfield and neighboring towns. Captain Hezekiah Johnson, Samuel Slafter, Joseph Storrs, and William Johnson 3rd, are known to have lived in Mansfield; Amos Fellows, James West, Adoniram Grant, and Samuel Cobb were of Tolland; Ebenezer Heath, Captain Abner Barker and William Johnson of Willington—towns adjacent to Mansfield on the north. The last nine names are those of New Hampshire and Massachusetts men—several of them members of the provincial government in the former province. Major Joseph Blanchard was of Dunstable, Mass. He had executed in 1760, by direction of Governor Wentworth, the first survey of the townships lying along the river from Charlestown to Newbury. His name appears as proprietor in many town charters about this time. But few of the original grantees ever came personally to Norwich to settle.

Many of them, it is probable, were people of considerable property, well advanced in life, whose years unfitted them to endure the hardships of pioneers in a new settlement. Such would naturally transfer their rights to their sons, or to the young and enterprising among their friends and neighbors. This is known to have been the case in several instances. But Jacob Fenton and Ebenezer Smith, both proprietors, were here in 1763. The former died on the 15th of July of that year, and was thus the first white man known to have died within the township. Captain Hezekiah Johnson emigrated to the town very early and settled near the mouth of Ompompanoosuc River. He was long a leading citizen, prominent in town affairs.

Calvin Johnson, son of Captain William Johnson of Willington, one of the original proprietors, removed to Norwich in 1780, after a service of nearly two years in the Revolutionary Army, and occupied 100 acres of land given him by his father. Five of the original grantees bear the name of Johnson—a family that has always been numerous in town. The name of Daniel Baldwin appears early on the town records, presumably the same person whose name is found in the charter. Samuel Slafter conveyed his right to his son, John Slafter, who accompanied Smith and Fenton to the new township in 1763—

well known afterwards as Deacon John Slafter, the pioneer settler of the town. Several other family names upon the list of grantees are still represented in considerable numbers among the inhabitants of the town, but whether these latter trace their lineage to the former is not known to the writer.

Space permits us only to glance at some of the most important steps taken by the proprietors of Norwich in forwarding the speedy settlement of the town. One essential preliminary to settlement was, of course, some regular division of the land into lots. The careful and accurate surveys that the United States Government now makes of all the public lands before they are offered for sale or settlement to actual settlers, were unknown to that time. The customary plan for opening up new lands to settlement at that day was by granting the soil to a body of proprietors under a charter. Virginia, Massachusetts, and most of the English colonies in America, as the reader will remember, were founded and settled by a chartered land company, the charter conferring also upon the future inhabitants certain political and corporate rights. The New Hampshire town charters appear to have been formed after the same model. At the first meeting of the proprietors at Mansfield, as above stated, a committee of five of their number was chosen to make a partial survey and allotment of lands in the new township. In the succeeding year (1762) a surveying party came on and that part of the town adjacent to Connecticut River was laid off into lots. In this first division, one lot of 100 acres was assigned to each proprietor, besides an equal share of the intervale land lying on the river, as had previously been determined.

The same year the proprietors voted to unite with the proprietors of the other townships (Hartford, Hanover, and Lebanon) in "clearing a road from the old fort in Number Four (Charlestown) on the east side of the river, as far up said river as a committee chosen for that purpose may think proper." This vote was carried into effect in 1763, so far that something called a road was opened as far north as the middle of the town of Hanover, and thus another hindrance to the opening up of the region to settlement was removed.

The location of this primitive roadway through the towns of Lebanon and Plainfield, we are informed, is still mainly followed by the present river road along the western border of those towns.

At an adjourned meeting of the proprietors held in November, 1762, their committee were empowered to agree "with such person or persons as will undertake to erect a mill or mills on the mill brook (Blood Brook) in said town of Norwich."

Early in the month of April, 1763, the proprietors, holding their meeting again at William Waterman's in Mansfield, "in order to encourage the speedy and effectual settlement of the town," it was voted "to raise £5 upon each proprietor's right"—about £1050 in the aggregate—"to be divided between twenty-five men who shall immediately engage to settle or cause to be settled twenty-five rights in the following manner: To begin upon the business the ensuing summer, and further to continue to settle and improve at the rate of three acres annually for the space of five years, on penalty of repaying said money." Permission was also given to each of the twenty-five first settlers to choose for himself a one-hundred acre lot of upland, provided the same be so chosen "as not to incommode any future division of lands in said town."

The requisite number of twenty-five men not appearing ready to undertake the work of settlement upon the conditions proposed, at a later meeting of the proprietors, held May 12th, it was agreed that in case "any number of men under twenty-five and not less than fifteen, shall by the first day of June next engage in the manner and form in which the said twenty-five men were to engage, they shall be entitled to the money in said vote."

In March, 1765, a committee consisting of Jacob Burton, Hezekiah Johnson, Samuel Fenton, John Hatch and John Slafter, was appointed by the proprietors to make a further division of 100-acre lots in Norwich and to "lay out roads as they shall think best for convenience of settling said township." Six shillings lawful money was voted on each right for this purpose and "other necessary business that shall be done by the committee."

This committee—composed of men at that time on the point of becoming actual settlers—proceeded in the following June to re-survey and lay off sixty-eight river lots, one to every proprietors's right, each twenty-five rods, four links wide and 160 rods in length from east to west along the banks of Connecticut River. Also, eighty 100-acre lots in five tiers of sixteen lots each, lying directly west of the lots just



named. Between the second and third tier of 100-acre lots, a highway, six rods wide, was located, and between the fourth and fifth tiers an eight-rod highway, for the whole distance of five miles north and south. Land was also left between every second lot for highways running east and west across the town. This seems a very formal and arbitrary method of laying out roads in a new country, but it was perhaps the best that could be done under the circumstances. Of course, in a rough country, roads were never actually built to run in such regular checker-board fashion, though it is true that the early settlers did not mind climbing the steepest hills.

Equally impracticable to us now seems the survey and assignment of a one-acre lot to each proprietor, as a town or village lot, as required by the charter of the town, to be located "as near as may be to the geographical center of the town."

Proprietors' meetings continued to be held at William Waterman's in Mansfield till 1768, when the first meeting was convened within the limits of the town (July 28th) at the house of Jacob Burton. At this meeting the committee mentioned above for laying out lots and highways made a formal report of their doings, which were approved, and their report by the surveyor, John Hatch, accepted and put upon record. This report, with others subsequently made, all too lengthy to be inserted here, is of considerable interest to land owners in town, and may be seen at the town clerk's office.

The last meeting of the proprietors, of which any record has been found, was held at Thomas Murdock's, in Norwich, September 17, 1770. It was then voted "to lay out into lots all the undivided land in s<sup>d</sup> town," and John Hatch, Captain Hezekiah Johnson, Mr. Peter Thatcher, Mr. John Slafter, Mr. John Wright, Mr. Samuel Partridge, and Mr. Samuel Waterman were chosen a committee for that purpose. It was also voted "to give a deed to Joseph Hatch and Oliver Babeock of the tenth river lot, upon the condition that they execute a bond to the proprietors' committee for upholding a Grist Mill where said grist mill now stands, on Blood Brook; that Isaac Fellows shall have the privilege of pitching thirty proprietors' rights on the meadow above the clay bank on Ompompanoosuc River, commonly called the middle meadow, containing 74 1-2 acres, for the consideration of building a saw mill and grist mill on s<sup>d</sup> river. Also that John Slafter

shall have the privilege of pitching seven rights in the lower meadow on Ompompanoosuc River, Hezekiah Johnson six rights, Peter Thatcher one and one-half rights, Daniel Waterman four rights, and James Huntington one right in said meadow, as a consideration for first coming into the town, and for the burden of first settling s<sup>d</sup> town."

We have been thus minute in transcribing the votes and action of the proprietors of the town during the initial period of first settlement, because it cannot be doubted that it was largely due to their liberal spirit and enterprising policy that the town was so early opened to settlement, and its growth so rapid from the beginning. Such a policy, of course, was as wise as it was generous, since the lands remaining unoccupied were appreciated in value with the coming in of every new settler. It is said that the usual fees paid by the grantees of a township under a New Hampshire charter were about \$300, which sum was in addition to liberal presents made to the governor, in many instances, for choice locations. One historian of New Hampshire complains that Governor Wentworth often preferred for grantees men of other colonies to those of his own, alleging that they were "better husbandmen and more liberal donors."

Very considerable advances, as we have seen, were required of the proprietors in surveying a township into lots, opening roads, and many other expenses. Allowing the town to contain 25,000 acres, an equal division of the land into sixty-eight shares would give upwards of three hundred acres to each right, after allowance for highways, etc.

Expenditures for fees, bounties paid to first settlers, charges for surveys and building roads, could not have amounted to an aggregate of less than thirty-five to forty dollars to each proprietor, up to the time of which we are now speaking.

## CHAPTER II

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### FIRST SETTLEMENTS IN NORWICH

Having glanced thus briefly at the action of the proprietors in opening a way to reach their new township in the wilderness, and in dividing up a portion of its surface into lots suitable to become the homesteads of future settlers, let us pause a moment and see what had meantime been done in the work of actual settlement.

I am indebted to Rev. Edmund F. Slafter of Boston for an interesting account of what was unquestionably the first attempt at settlement made within the limits of the town. I quote from the Slafter Memorial:—

“Samuel Slafter [of Mansfield, Ct.], the father of John Slafter, being an original proprietor, and being at the first meeting chosen treasurer of the corporation, took a deep interest in the settlement of the town. At his suggestion, his son John made a journey through the forests of New Hampshire in 1762, to examine the territory and report upon the advantages it might offer as a place of settlement. He found it pleasantly situated on the western banks of the Connecticut, with a good soil, but for the most part of an uneven, hilly surface. He reported it well watered, not only by the Connecticut but by several small, clear streams, and by one more important one called the Om-pompanoosuc, an Indian name signifying ‘the place of very white stones,’ whose waters emptied themselves into the Connecticut at the northeastern part of the town. As he was inclined to engage in the settlement of the new town, the next year (June 7, 1763) his father transferred to him as ‘a token of his affection,’ all his rights as proprietor of Norwich. He immediately set out for the new scene of his labors, in company with Mr. Jacob Fenton, his maternal uncle, and Mr. Ebenezer Smith, both of them original proprietors. They took with them a horse and such implements as were indispensable in be-

ginning a settlement. On arriving at their new possessions, they found themselves alone in an unbroken forest, where the echo of the woodsman's axe had perhaps never yet been heard. He first commenced to fell the trees on the river lot No. 17, which had been assigned to his father's right, in the division of the proprietors, which was a mile and a quarter north from the southern boundary of the town. This lot, unlike most others, proved to be a high, rocky elevation, reaching to the very shore of the river, difficult of cultivation, unsuitable as a homestead, and was immediately abandoned. A permanent settlement was fixed upon further up the river, opposite the farm of Mr. Timothy Smith in Hanover, about four miles north of the present seat of Dartmouth College, and where the well known rope ferry was for many years maintained. Here the first clearing was commenced, and the first human habitation in the town was constructed. The summer was passed in felling the forest, in burning the wood, and preparing the soil for future cultivation. In the autumn, when the cold season approached, and nothing more could be accomplished, he returned to his home in Connecticut,—and this was repeated four summers, until he married and brought his young wife to his forest home."

An incident occurred during the first summer, worthy of record in itself, and important in fixing the date of the first settlement of the town. On Wednesday, the 13<sup>th</sup> of July, Messrs. Slafter, Fenton, and Smith left their home to lend their services for a few days to some friends who were making a settlement at Lebanon, six or eight miles below. Recent rains had swollen the Connecticut, and Mr. Fenton's horse in crossing was compelled to swim a short distance in the deepest part of the river, which was near the shore to which he was approaching. The horse was carried down the current, and passed under the trunk of a tree which had fallen into the river, the roots still clinging to the shore. In passing under the trunk of the tree, while leaning forward to avoid being carried from his seat, his horse rising at the instant, forced him with great violence upon the pommel of the saddle, causing a serious injury of the chest. It was soon found necessary for Mr. Fenton to return, and Mr. Smith and a young Mr. Hovey who had joined them, accompanied him to his camp in Norwich. They remained with him, doing what they could for him, but the injury



proved so serious that he died on Friday of the same week. On Saturday the two young men proceeded down the river on the Vermont side, and by hallooing and discharging their muskets, endeavored to attract the attention of their friends at Lebanon, and thus communicate with Mr. Slafter, but in this they were unsuccessful. However, on regaining the camp before nightfall, they found that Mr. Slafter had already returned, and had been apprised of the sad and unexpected event of his uncle's death. On Sunday morning, assisted by his companions, he proceeded to make preparation for the burial. They peeled the bark from a basswood of suitable size, and with reverent heads and sorrowing hearts placed their companion within its pure, white surface, closing it up and making it fast with thongs twisted from the tough bark of the young elm. On the bank of the Connecticut, near to its quiet waters, they placed him in the clean earth to await the resurrection day. A monument of stone was erected, and an inscription placed upon it by Mr. Slafter. This monument remained in its place about eighty years.\* At length it became broken and somewhat defaced. A portion of it, however, is still preserved, and is now in the possession of one of the grandchildren of Mr. Slafter.

The date of 1763 is so far preserved as to be clearly identified. The 1 is complete, the upper part of the 7 is gone, so is likewise the perpendicular part of the 6, but the 3 is as distinct as when it was first chiseled upon the stone. This monument still bears testimony to the year in which this death occurred. But if this evidence were wanting, there is yet another record made at the time, which establishes the date of this occurrence beyond the possibility of a doubt. In the book of records of births and deaths in the town of Mansfield, Conn., is the following entry:—"Mr. Jacob Fenton of Mansfield, departed this life at Norwich, in New Hampshire, on ye 15<sup>th</sup> day of July A. D. 1763"

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"Mr. Slafter was married at Mansfield, Ct., in the spring of 1767, and a month later departed with his young wife to his home in the New Hampshire Grants. A journey from Connecticut, with a family, was at that time an undertaking of no small moment. The distance was 150 miles, mostly through the primitive forest, and the road, for fifty miles at least, was scarcely passable except for footmen and

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\*The site of this monument was in the meadow.

pack-horses. Several families from the same neighborhood were at this time emigrating to the Coos Country, and they accordingly joined together and 'made up a pleasant party.' It was decided to navigate the Connecticut rather than to encounter the difficulties of an overland route. Having provided themselves with log canoes, they embarked with their 'goods,' probably at Windsor, Conn. They left Mansfield on Thursday, the 23rd of April, and arrived at their home in Norwich on the 10th of May. Against the current of the river, which was very strong at that period of the year, they were not able to make more than eight or nine miles a day. In several places in the river the rapids, or falls, could not be passed, and they were obliged to unship their goods and carry them and their boats around, and reload, before they could pursue their journey. It was, as we may well imagine, a joyful moment when they arrived at their destination, and were at home in their rude habitations. These were the same as had served during the preceding summers. But preparations had already been made, and before the frosts of winter approached, Mr. Slafter had built, on the banks of the Connecticut, a comfortable and substantial dwelling. As mills for sawing lumber had not then been erected within practical distance, the material was fashioned by the axe, without the use of plane or jointer. Small trees, of not more than a foot in diameter, were carefully hewed, halved together at the intersections, and placed upon a foundation, and tier upon tier added, until a suitable height had been attained for receiving the roof. This was formed by placing upon proper rafters, bound together at frequent intervals by ribs or small beams, the thick, impervious bark of the hemlock and other trees. In this way a covering was made, giving complete protection from the rains of summer and snows of winter. The floors were formed of plank, hewed and fitted with the axe alone. Their furniture was of the modest kind. Their tables and chairs were puncheons of basswood, a split log having its faces a little smoothed with an axe, with legs inserted of suitable length. Such was the rude abode of the pioneer."

The Genealogy of the Mann Family contains an account of a wedding trip made by John Mann and wife of Hebron, Conn., who emigrated to Orford, N. H., in the fall of 1765, which illustrates some

of the infelicities of a journey to the new settlements, by the pioneers who took the land route.

Mr. Mann was married to Lydia Porter in October, 1765, and the same month set out with his young bride to take possession of a lot in Orford given him by his father. They left Hebron—a few miles to the southwest of Mansfield—October 16th, on horseback, both riding on one horse as far as Charlestown, and reached Orford October 24th, after a journey of nine days, exactly one-half the time occupied by Mr. Slafter and his party, by way of the river, a year and a half later. Mr. Mann's route lay up the east side of Connecticut River. At Charlestown he dismounted, and having procured a bushel of oats for his horse and some luncheon for himself and wife, set forward into the wilderness, Mr. Mann on foot, Mrs. Mann, with such supply of clothing and household goods as they had, packed upon horseback. In some of the towns along the way there were two or three families with whom they stayed at night, who cordially received them and welcomed them with homely fare. Claremont then contained two families, Cornish one, Plainfield one, Lebanon three, Hanover one, and Lyme three. Beyond Charlestown the road at that time was nothing but a crooked bridle path obstructed by fallen trees and with no bridges across the streams. The difficulty of passing some of the larger trees that lay athwart their path was most readily surmounted by urging the horse into a brisk pace, and thus crossing them by a flying leap. So frequent had this become that ere long the wise old steed, realizing the situation, no longer waited for a hint, but soon as ever he neared such an obstacle would plunge forward, and refusing all control, clear it with a bound. In one instance of this kind, the poor beast, miscalculating the distance or failing of a sure foothold, was thrown at full length to the earth, scattering his living and other freight upon the ground in a fine state of disorder. Fortunately, no serious damage was sustained, and the two wayfarers gathered up their effects and proceeded, Mr. Mann the remainder of the journey keeping ahead of the horse, where he might be in a situation to moderate the spirit of the animal and protect his precious freight.

About the same time and by the same route traveled by Mr. Mann, John Hutchinson, from Ashford, Conn., brought his wife and one or two small children into Norwich, in the autumn of 1765. Mr. Hutch-

inson brought with him a horse, upon which rode wife and babes, some clothing, bedding, etc., and also another necessary animal to a growing family—a cow. A log canoe conveyed the family safely across the river from the Hanover side, but the animals were compelled to swim, and Jerome Hutchinson, the oldest child, then less than three years of age, was fond of relating when an old man his distinct remembrance of the appearance presented of the old white-faced cow as she struggled bravely to keep her head above water while swimming the river. Mr. Hutchinson had not brought his family into the wilderness at an inclement season of the year without making some provision for their support during the winter. Early the preceding summer, in company with his father, Samuel Hutchinson, Sr., he had come to Norwich, and they had felled the trees on a small island in the Connecticut opposite the farm of John W. Loveland, which trees the spring floods subsequently carried into the stream. This island they had then planted to corn, with seed brought from Charlestown, N. H. The first planting failed by reason of bad seed, and John returned on foot to Charlestown for a fresh supply, which was attended with success. When the growing corn no longer required their care, they both returned to Connecticut, and now the young man, accompanied by his family, repaired to the scene of his previous labors in time to secure the crop of corn, whatever it might be, and to make such arrangements as were practicable for a permanent home. The ensuing winter they passed in a log hut erected on the meadow now belonging to E. M. Lewis, and not far from the western end of the present bridge connecting Norwich and Hanover. This hut they occupied with another family, by the name of Messenger, that had come to Norwich about the same time or a little earlier than Mr. Hutchinson, and these two families were undoubtedly the first white people who ever wintered in Norwich (winter of 1765-66). Although they had chosen as sunny and sheltered a spot probably for a dwelling as could be found in town, that winter must have been dreary and cheerless enough to them in their solitary habitation in the woods. Game from the surrounding forest and fish from adjacent brook and river must have been their chief reliance for food. Mr. Messenger, it is related, was a professional hunter or sportsman, and not long after lost his life while fishing on the river, in this manner: His canoe, it appeared, went adrift while



he was asleep in it, and he was carried down with the current until upset and drowned at the falls—Olcott's Falls—some distance below.

In the absence of any precise knowledge of the manner of life pursued by our Norwich pioneers during that first winter, we will quote once more from the Mann Genealogy a few sentences descriptive of the circumstances under which Mr. John Mann and his wife passed the same period at Orford, N. H., but a few miles away and amid surroundings very similar: "Removed as they were from all places for obtaining the conveniences and comforts of life, they had to rely upon their own efforts to obtain only a small portion of what was needed. A few chairs and a bedstead, and something for a table, were indispensable articles. An abundance of timber was everywhere around them, but no sawmill to convert it into lumber. No wagon roads were constructed on which articles for housekeeping could be transported. No canals were cut around the numerous falls in the river—for the ascent of water craft. \* \* \* As there was no land cleared or grain raised in town, Mr. Mann having some tools for cooperage, made pails and tubs and as soon as the river was sufficiently frozen, put them on a handsled, and drew them to Newbury on the ice and exchanged them for corn with the three families of Johnson, Bagley, and Hazen who had been there three years and raised corn. The distance on the river was about twenty miles. This corn, with or without roasting, was pounded in a mortar; then the finest parts baked into bread, the coarser part was boiled, which was called hominy. The mortar was made of a section of a large hardwood log set up on end and the top hollowed by burning so large and deep as to hold from three to eight quarts. With a pestle the corn was pounded until it was sufficiently fine for use." A son of Mr. Mann gives us an idea of the "chores" required of boys in those days: "When an auger was wanted to make a bedstead, it was only to step nine miles through the woods to Mr. John Chamberlin in Thetford—known among his townsmen as 'Quail John'—who was the only person living in that town, and borrow one of him, and when the bedstead and two or three chair frames were put together, just step through the nine miles of woods to return it." "And," he adds, "this labor and fatigue was considered as nothing!"

The hardships and privations of the early settlers of Vermont have been so often described, both by those who experienced them and by later writers, that it does not seem necessary to enlarge upon the subject here. The pioneers of Norwich probably did not suffer for the necessities of life to the extent that those of some of the towns back from Connecticut River did, and at a still later day. Settlements were begun at about the same time in all the towns along the river from Charlestown to Newbury, and the river, in the almost universal absence of roads, was not only the best natural channel for supplies from the older settlements at the southward, but also furnished the immigrants a ready means of communicating with and assisting each other in time of need, which was wanting to the more thinly scattered inhabitants of the highlands of the interior. A vivid description of the trials and difficulties that attended the opening up to settlement of some of the towns in the central part of the state, is found in the narrative of Jabez Fitch, from Norwich, Conn., one of the first settlers of the town of Hydepark, about the year 1787-8.\*

As late as 1771, Deacon John Burnap emigrated with his family of six children to Norwich from Lebanon, Conn., by the route followed by Messrs. Mann and Hutchinson, as above described. They traveled the whole distance on foot, bearing the family goods in packs upon their backs.

Elijah Burnap, then a boy of fifteen, carried upon his back a weight of thirty pounds through the wilderness, as his proportion of the necessary burden.

They built a log house, and established their new home in the north-eastern part of the town.

Very little can now be ascertained in detail as to the progress of settlement in these earliest years. The tide of immigration did not set very strongly into town before 1767 or 1768. It is doubtful if the fifteen new settlers for whom the proprietors offered liberal bounties in 1763 were actually obtained. For three or four years following 1763, it is probable that several men came on each year, selected lots, passed the summer upon their clearings, and returned back to Connecticut at the approach of winter, as was customary at that time. At a proprietors' meeting held at Mansfield in March, 1765, it was

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\*See Vermont Historical Gazetteer, Vol. II. pp. 640-652.

voted, that "any proprietor who goes this year [as a settler] shall choose his 100 acres, and do two months' work upon his right by the first day of October next."

A similar vote was passed in April, 1766. The statement made in Thompson's Gazetteer of Vermont that "in the summer of 1764, four men moved their families into the township," has been questioned by Rev. Grant Powers in his "Sketches of the Coos Country," on the authority of Doctor Asa Burton of Thetford, who affirmed that his father, Jacob Burton, came to Norwich from Stonington, Conn., in the summer of that year, "for the purpose of locating himself if he was suited with appearances." "At that time," he adds, "there was no inhabitant in town." As Jacob Burton was again in Norwich in 1765, engaged with others in laying out lots as one of the committee of the proprietors, it is doubtful if any families were permanently established here earlier than the fall of 1765. The first substantial improvements in the southern part of the town were made by Jacob Burton in 1766. In June of that year he made his third visit to Norwich, accompanied by his son Asa and some other hands, by whose assistance he built a saw mill on Blood Brook, at the western outskirts of the present village of Norwich—upon the same site where George Burton's saw mill stood previous to the great freshet of 1869, just below the bridge near the tannery of Messenger and Hazen. This mill, probably completed in 1766, was beyond doubt the first sawmill built in Norwich, or within a circuit of many miles. It supplied the necessary lumber for the earliest buildings in the surrounding country. The same or the following year, Mr. Burton built for himself a house a short distance from the mill. This house was located a little west of the dwelling of Azro Turner and very near a large elm tree now standing in the adjacent field. Here on the 28th of July, 1768, was convened the first meeting of the proprietors of Norwich held within the limits of the town. Boards sawed from first growth pine at this mill about this time are still in use. They form part of the outside covering of a barn upon the premises of Deacon Henry Hutchinson, believed to have been built in the year 1767.\* About thirty years ago this barn was reshingled for the first time. On removing the old

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\*Since the above was written, this barn has been demolished to give place to a handsome building on the same site, with modern conveniences and improvements.



shingles—made from pine of the original growth—one especially broad and handsome shingle, was found plainly marked with the figures “1767,” denoting, it is fair to presume, the year it was laid upon the roof. Whether or not this circumstance affords conclusive evidence of the age of the building, no one who has seen it can doubt that it is one of the very oldest buildings now standing in town. Mr. Samuel Hutchinson, Sr., who erected it, was chosen one of the selectmen of the town in March, 1767. The farm that he settled upon and cleared up has ever since been owned and occupied by his descendants.

For several years after the first settlers came in, it is probable that they were obliged to travel a considerable distance to mills, to get their grain ground. John Spafford's mill at Charlestown, N. H., and Timothy Lull's on Lull's Brook at Hartland were much resorted to about this time by people living along the Connecticut River as far north as Newbury.

But the proprietors' records of the year 1770 as already quoted, show that a grist mill was then standing on Blood Brook in Norwich, built by Joseph Hatch and Oliver Babcock. This mill, it is understood, occupied the same site as the present grist mill, operated by D. E. Burbank. It probably did at first only a coarse kind of grinding. As the same early period a saw mill and grist mill had also been built on Pompanoosuc River, at the northeastern part of the town, by Isaac Fellows, as appears from the concession granted him of pitching 74 1-2 acres on said river adjacent to his mills. These mills stood on nearly the same ground as those now owned by L. S. Patterson.

After Jacob Burton's, Captain Joseph Hatch doubtless built the first dwelling house on Norwich Plain. This house stood at the southern extremity of the village, nearly opposite the present residence of the widow of Erastus Messenger. In this house the first town meeting in Norwich was held on the second Tuesday of March, 1768. A few years later—by a pretty clear tradition, in 1773—Mr. Hatch built the present Messenger house, which remains to this day without essential change, inside or out, and is now the oldest house in the village, and perhaps in town, occupied as a dwelling. The dwelling of W. S. Hazen, the Deacon John Slafter house built in 1786, and that of Mr. Charles Hazen, near the south line of Norwich in Hartford, somewhat modernized in 1883, are each specimens yet remaining of a similar

style of the better farm houses of that day. The house of Charles Hazen is known to date from the year 1775. For more than twenty years afterward, the house of Joseph Hatch, of Jacob Burton and of Elisha Burton (now D. A. Armstrong's) were the only dwellings on Norwich Plain.

As early as 1768, settlers had arrived in considerable numbers, and begun to clear up farms two or three miles back from the Connecticut River. In addition to those already mentioned, the following are ascertained to have arrived and established themselves during or previous to that year:—In the south part of the town, Thomas Murdock, John and Joseph Hatch, Samuel Partridge, Sr., Aaron Wright and Ebenezer Ball. These were all men in middle life, with families, and brought with them numerous children, several of whom were grown men and women. The children of each of the above families, except Joseph Hatch's, are all believed to have been born in Connecticut. With Jacob Burton came at least six grown up children—four sons and two daughters. His sons, Josiah and Elisha, were then recently married and were already engaged in making themselves homes of their own in town; Thomas Murdock, soon to become a leading citizen of the town, established himself half a mile north of the site of the present village of Norwich. Lieutenant Samuel Partridge with his five sons and two daughters settled where Ambrose Currier now lives. His son, Elisha Partridge, married Margaret Murdock in 1765, located where Charles A. Slack now is.

Aaron Wright and his son John (lately married to Olive, daughter of Samuel Partridge,) occupied the 100 acres next north of Lieutenant Partridge. Adjoining the Wright family on the north was John Hatch (where Deacon John Dutton now lives), who had come on from Preston, Conn., with his brother Joseph, the Wrights, Partridges, and Murdocks, and bringing with him a family of eight children, the youngest about three years old. A little farther north were probably already located the Brown family [Samuel and Israel] and the Ball family [Ebenezer, Joseph].

At the north part of the town, besides John Slafter, living at the river (near John A. Sargent's), there was Captain Hezekiah Johnson (where Richard Waterman now lives), Daniel and (probably) Samuel Waterman with families from Mansfield, Conn., Daniel Waterman

settling where William Waterman now lives, with James Huntington, Peter Thatcher and Medad Benton in the same neighborhood, and Joseph and Francis Smalley and Francis Fenton not far off.

At this time, and still more unmistakably at a later date, we see the tide of immigration into Norwich setting strongly towards the high lands and away from the banks of streams and rivers. Surprise is often expressed that the first settlers in Vermont should almost invariably have made their first clearings and fixed their habitations upon the summits of the highest hills. The prominent cause for this seems to have been that all low ground was then altogether too wet for cultivation. People at the present day have little idea of the extent to which the surface of the ground has become less moist than when it was covered with an unbroken forest. The opening up of the face of the country to the direct contact of sun and wind has wrought a wonderful change in this regard. What are now considered the most valuable lands in town—the clay lands—were almost entirely neglected for many years.

Another cause, based somewhat on sentimental considerations, may have operated to some extent. If the settler pitched his home upon a hill, his situation gave him an outlook and a prospect over the surrounding country—a consideration of no mean importance to the pioneer and his family in their solitary life in the woods. That he was able to look out and see even the smoke from a neighbor's dwelling, or watch the progress of his work in a distant clearing, must have helped to cheer and support him in his own lonely labors.

But the life of our pioneer settlers, though involving great hardships and self-denial, was not altogether isolated and unsocial. Before 1770 a large and steady stream of immigration was pouring into the new towns along Connecticut river. "The woods were full" of new settlers. On foot and on horseback, men, women, and children thronged the rough and narrow roads beside the river in the spring of every year. Their canoes and boats dotted the river itself. Late in winter or early spring many came by sleds and sleighs drawn upon the firm ice that bridged the stream from shore to shore. Rev. Mr. Sanderson, in his history of Charlestown, N. H., says that the town was crowded with companies which had come there to take an outlook upon the new lands of which they had heard marvellous tales from the rangers and

soldiers who had traversed the region during the French and Indian wars. And it is not strange if the smooth and fertile hillsides and rich intervalles of Vermont did seem a veritable land of Canaan to the immigrant accustomed to the stony and sterile fields of eastern Massachusetts and Connecticut. According to Mr. Sanderson, the traffic in supplies for travelers and those newly arrived was a source of much profit to the people of Charlestown. Not only were the inns of the place frequently filled to overflowing, but every private family had all they could victual and lodge.

Early in the history of the town the immigrant population began to be increased by the native born. The first child born within its limits was Lydia Hutchinson, daughter of John Hutchinson, born Oct. 6, 1766. John Slaughter's daughter Christiana was born Feb. 6, 1768. John Waterman, son of Daniel Waterman, is believed to be the first male child born in town. The town records show the names of children born to other pioneer settlers during these first years, among them two sons of Elisha Partridge (Reuben and Harper), born Sept. 30, 1771, and June, 1769; two sons of Elisha Burton (Levi and Stephen) born in April, 1768, and December, 1769; and two daughters (Zerviah and Lydia) of Josiah Burton, born respectively Sept. 7, 1767, and Aug. 14, 1769. Some of these births, with others on record contemporary with these, doubtless actually occurred in Connecticut.

In marked contrast with that motley population of mixed nationalities which now pours constantly into the new states and territories west of the Mississippi, was the uniform character of the early settlers of the towns in the upper valley of the Connecticut. Never was a tract of country colonized and settled by a more homogeneous people. On both sides of the river, nearly all were emigrants from Connecticut, and from that portion of Connecticut lying east of the great river. By far the greater part came from a small group of towns lying around Mansfield and Lebanon. A radius of twenty miles extended in every direction from the present town of Willimantic would cover pretty much the whole ground. As regards Norwich, considerable research among the oldest families has not revealed the first one among the inhabitants of the town previous to the year 1790 (then numbering more than 1,000 souls) that in coming here did not leave a home in eastern Connecticut. Norwich and Hanover were largely settled by



emigrants from Mansfield; Hartford; Lebanon and Piermont from Lebanon, Conn.; Thetford, Orford and Fairlee from Hebron; and Strafford and Sharon from Hebron and Goshen. Most of these towns received their first inhabitants in 1765—Thetford, Hartford and Lebanon may have had each one or two families a single year earlier. Of Norwich itself, after Mansfield and Preston, Tolland, Lebanon, Hebron, Willington and Coventry were the principal mother towns. From *Mansfield*, as we have seen, came the pioneer families of John Slafter and Capt. Hezekiah Johnson, with the Waterman, Fenton, Huntington, Sargent, and Hovey families. From *Tolland* came the Benton, Newton, Nye, Stimson, Yeomans and West families. From *Hebron* came Buck, Sawyer and the Wrights. From *Lebanon*, Burnap, Curtis, Lyman, Thatcher, Cushman. From *Botton*, Olcott, Fellows and Boardman. From *Norwich*, Coit, Baxter and Waterman. From *Weathersfield*, Goodrich and Loveland. From *Wellington*, the Cushmans (except Capt. Solomon) and the most numerous branch of the Johnsons. From *Franklin*, the Armstrongs. From *Ashford*, the Hutchinsons. From *Lyme*, Lewis. From *Coventry*, Brigham, Hibbard and Spear. From *Preston*, the Browns, Partridges and Burtons, with the Hatch brothers and Thomas Murdock.

As the Puritan founders of Massachusetts and Connecticut gave to their first plantations in the new world the names of the dear old English towns they had left behind, so we find the names of Connecticut towns reappearing in large numbers in the Connecticut valley towns of Vermont and New Hampshire. Norwich, Hartford, Lebanon, Lyme, Plainfield, Enfield, Windsor and Woodstock are examples that readily suggest themselves in this immediate neighborhood. Fifty-five towns in Vermont, it is said, are the namesakes of Connecticut towns.

“Here fond remembrance fixed her much-loved names.”

Vermont has been called the child of Connecticut. The men who shaped her early history and molded her constitution and laws were chiefly Connecticut men. With few exceptions, they were natives of Connecticut who filled the important offices of the new state for the first half century after settlement—the governors, the judges, legislators, congressmen and soldiers, who made the name of “Green Moun-

tain Boys" famous in American history.\* Our staunch yeomanry were of the same stuff—of the same resolute, enterprising and hardy race that about the same time settled—amid many tribulations—the Wyoming valley in Pennsylvania, and a few years later, in successive migrations, swept into western New York and the Western Reserve of Ohio carrying with them everywhere the common school, the town meeting, and an educated ministry, secured the great Northwest to freedom, and so firmly fixed the character of the institutions that dominate to-day in America. Virginia has been honored as "the mother of presidents,"—to Connecticut belongs the more honorable title of mother of free states—and her first-born was Vermont.

The founding of Dartmouth College at Hanover in 1769 was an event of great interest and importance to the early settlers of Norwich. Besides the advantages it promised for the convenient higher education of their children,—advantages to which they were fully alive, as shown by their liberal subscriptions in land and money to its endowment—the building up of such an institution in the immediate neighborhood created an instant demand for labor and supplies of every kind. The president, Doctor Wheelock, through his Indian pupil, Samson Occum, and other agents, had collected in England and Scotland several thousand pounds to be expended in the establishment and support of a new college in the wilderness. The effect of this expenditure could not fail to make money more plenty and to contribute in various ways to the material prosperity of the vicinage. The conversion and education of the Indians was the leading purpose that animated Doctor Wheelock in thus setting up his college on the very borders of civilization. And surely no pious brotherhood of priests, no lonely mission of French or Spanish Jesuits, by western lake or river, ever planted an institution of learning or religion into wilder scenes and surroundings. The location of the college at Hanover was decided upon early in the summer of 1770, after Doctor Wheelock and two of the trustees from Connecticut had made a tour of several weeks' exploration along the river and through the northern part of New

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\*Seven of the ten first governors, and five of the nine first lieutenant governors of Vermont were natives of Connecticut, as were eleven of the sixteen first judges of the Supreme Court whose place is known. So were two-thirds of all the higher officers of the State during the first fifty years of its history.



Hampshire. A tradition in the Burton family asserts that the location was finally fixed at a conference held at the house of Jacob Burton in Norwich, in June, 1770, between Doctor Wheelock and his associates and some of the leading men of this and neighboring towns; a tradition by no means improbable, and it may also be here said, incidentally, that the location might probably have been placed at Norwich rather than Hanover, had not New Hampshire a short time before, in compliance with the royal decision of July 20, 1765, formally renounced her jurisdiction over all territory west of Connecticut river, in favor of New York, thus leaving Norwich just outside the domain of the authority (Governor Wentworth of New Hampshire) which had granted the college charter. To many of the inhabitants of Norwich and adjacent towns, Doctor Wheelock was then personally well known as a favorite preacher and for many years the preceptor of Moor's Charity School at Lebanon, Conn., in the very neighborhood from which they had themselves lately come. And while Norwich was at this time thickly dotted with clearings and contained nearly 200 people, her sister township of Hanover across the river was still, in all the western portion at least, an almost unbroken wilderness. Hanover Plain was a forest of gigantic white pines, some of which reached a height of more than 200 feet.\* The stalwart sons of Jacob Burton, with other young men from Norwich, helped to cut down these monarchs of the primitive forest in the early summer of 1770, so that when Doctor Wheelock came on with workmen and teams in the August following, a beginning had been made and sunshine admitted to a few acres of ground where the village of Hanover now stands.

A few weeks later when the family of President Wheelock and students to the number of about thirty arrived, a log hut eighteen feet square was the only building ready to receive them. A house for the president, and a college building 32x80 feet, both of logs (?) had been commenced. A unique spectacle it must have been when the straggling procession of Moor's Charity School and Dartmouth College made their debut into Hanover, as they emerged slowly from the surrounding

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\*One tree was found to be 270 feet by actual measurement. An acre of land could be enclosed, it is said, by four of these monsters properly felled. The white pine is one of the longest lived of our native trees. Doctor Williams says that some of the largest pines on Connecticut river, of the original growth, were ascertained to be between 300 and 400 years old, by count of their concentric rings when cut.

forest into the little clearing on some September afternoon in 1770, the students on foot, driving before them a few cows and pigs belonging to the college, the whole equipment and endowment of the institution loaded into a few ox carts, and Madame Wheelock and the females of the Doctor's family bringing up the rear in the family carriage—the first four-wheeled vehicle, assuredly, that ever rolled into this part of the country. Until the last of October, when the college building was made fit for occupation, the students camped out in booths which they made for themselves of boughs and bark, in true Indian fashion.

The journals and correspondence of President Wheelock, in these first years following the establishment of the college at Hanover, are curious and instructive, as affording some insight into the manner of life and the difficulties and trials experienced in making new settlements at that period. Writing to Doctor Erskine Dec. 7, 1770, he says: "My nearest neighbor in town is 2 1-2 miles from me; I can see nothing but the lofty pines about me." (There were about twenty families at that time living in the east part of Hanover, three or four miles back from the river.)

The difficulty of procuring provisions compelled the sending of part of the students back to Connecticut, at the beginning of the first winter. Breadstuffs were brought chiefly from Northfield and Montague, Mass., for the subsistence of the settlement and school. For two years the larger part of the supply of food for the support of the school was transported from one to two hundred miles, over bad roads, from the older settlements of New Hampshire and Massachusetts. Doctor Wheelock writes that the cheapest fodder he had for his teams and a few cows the second winter after coming to Hanover, was brought forty miles on sleds by oxen. Active and persistent efforts were at the same time put forth to make the colony self supporting. A saw and grist mill was built on Mink Brook in 1771, seventy acres of land cleared and twenty cropped with wheat, and about fifteen tons of hay cut and stacked. In September, 1773, he reports about thirty tons of hay cut that summer, reaped twenty acres of English grain, and twenty acres of Indian corn on the ground; fifteen acres fenced and sowed to winter wheat; 500 acres had been cut and girdled for future

cultivation, and about 2,000 acres of "wilderness" enclosed with fence, "so that oxen, cows, horses, etc., may be restrained from rambling beyond my reach." He employed from twenty to thirty men laboring for the college in his farming and building operations. His live stock consisted of seven oxen and twenty cows. Whole number of students during the year, about eighty, including sixteen or seventeen Indian boys. \* \* \* \* "A little more than three years ago," he adds, "there was nothing to be seen here but a horrid wilderness. Now there are eleven comfortable dwelling houses, besides one for the students, built by tradesmen and others, who have settled within sixty rods of the college."

Our Norwich settlers, as already intimated, sympathized keenly with Doctor Wheelock, their venerable friend and former neighbor at Lebanon, Conn., in his benevolent designs and self denying labors to remove his charity school and set up a college at their very doors. And they testified their sense of the importance of his undertaking to themselves by contributing liberally from their slender means for its endowment. Besides labor and materials which, in the general absence of money in the new settlements, were most readily afforded, a list of subscribers which has been preserved shows that nearly every adult male person then living in town gave the infant college some pecuniary help in its day of small beginnings.

Previous to its location at Hanover in 1770, a subscription paper had been circulated through the towns along both sides of the river, which were the only towns that then contained any considerable population. The Norwich subscribers to this paper were thirty-four in number, and their subscriptions amount in the aggregate to £35, 10s. in money and about 600 acres of land given to the college. This amount was probably largely increased in the years immediately following 1770.

The counties of Cumberland and Gloucester had been organized by New York in 1766, out of the territory lying between the Green Mountains and Connecticut River. In the year 1771 a census of these counties was made under the authority of that province. All the towns in Windham and Windsor Counties, as now constituted, belonged to Cumberland County; the remaining portion of the state to the north-

ward, then mostly unsettled, was called the county of Gloucester.\*

By the census of 1771, the population of the two counties of Cumberland and Gloucester was returned as 4669—(Cumberland, 3947; Gloucester, 722). Norwich was found to contain 206 people distributed among forty families. In this enumeration the inhabitants were classified as to age and sex only. The number of males above sixteen years of age was found to be 66, the number of females 48. The number of males under sixteen was 53, the number of females 39. The number of children or young people under sixteen (92 out of a total of 206) is remarkable. Reckoning forty families in town, there would remain twenty-six unmarried men and eight unmarried women over sixteen years old in the new settlement.

Using the results of this census in connection with the list of subscribers to the Dartmouth College fund of 1770 and with some help from the town records, we are able to ascertain with considerable certainty the names of each of the forty men, heads of families, living in Norwich in the year 1771. These are the names of the principal pioneer settlers of the town, and they may properly be regarded and here recorded as the

#### FATHERS OF THE TOWN

John Hutchinson	John Slafter
Nathan Messenger	Hezekiah Johnson
Jacob Burton	Daniel Waterman
Thomas Murdock	Samuel Waterman
Elisha Burton	Josiah Goodrich
John Sargent	Timothy Bush
Josiah Burton	Peter Thatcher
Samuel Partridge	Joseph Smalley
Elisha Partridge	Francis Smalley
John Hatch	James Huntington
Joseph Hatch	Medad Benton
Aaron Wright	John Burnap
John Wright	David Turner

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\*In the first organization of eastern Vermont into counties by New York, Norwich belonged to Cumberland County. In March, 1772, a change of boundary was made which placed the town in Gloucester County. In the new division, which was thenceforth maintained, the north line of the county of Cumberland began at the southwest corner of Royalton, and ran thence on a course of South 60 degrees East to Connecticut River.



Samuel Brown	Daniel Baldwin (?)
John Hopson	Jesse Geer (?)
Samuel Hutchinson	Gershem Bartlett (?)
Ebenezar Ball	John Rogers (?)
Joseph Lewis	Elisha Crane (?)
Elijah Gates	Isaac Fellows (?)
Samuel Wright	
Benjamin Hatch	
Israel Brown	
Samuel Partridge, Jr.	
Samuel Brown, Jr.	
Simeon Carpenter	
Jonas Richards	

Twenty-seven of the above names are found on the college subscription list of 1770. In respect only to the last six names [marked with the interrogation (?)] does any uncertainty exist, and here the doubt does not relate to their residence, but as to whether their respective families had then come into town.

The names in the left hand column belong to men who settled in the south and those in the right hand column to settlers in the north or central portions of the town. The following may be added, names of unmarried young men then resident here and actively engaged in the work of settlement:—Israel Brown, Peter Thatcher, Joseph Ball, Samuel Hutchinson, Jr., Daniel Baldwin, James Smalley, and Ebenezar Jaques.

The figures set against other towns in Cumberland County, in the census of 1771, show Norwich in the first rank if not leading all others in the number of its population. Hartford had 190, Sharon 68, Hartland 144, and Windsor 203.

Across the river, the nearest New Hampshire towns contained numbers very similar. Two years later, in 1773, Hanover had 342 (including 8 slaves and 90 students at college), Lebanon 295, Lyme 241, and Orford 222. But in those two years Norwich had made large gains.

Ten years had now elapsed since the town was chartered by New Hampshire and five since the tide of immigration first set vigorously into it. A little community of more than 200 persons had been col-

lected, scores of clearings made in the primitive forest, and a virgin soil made to yield food for man and beast; roads had been opened, mills built, a church had been organized (in 1770), and the homes of the people began to possess some of the most indispensable comforts of civilized life. Children played where but lately the bear and wolf roamed unmolested and unscared.

But everything was still crude and rough in the new frontier town; the people lived in log houses almost destitute of furniture or utensils, ate coarse food and wore homespun clothes of linen or woolen fabric. It was a long way yet to the railroad and telegraph, to pianos and sewing machines, or even to the first cooking stove. It was more than thirty years later before Norwich had a postoffice.



### CHAPTER III.

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#### NORWICH IN THE CONTROVERSY WITH NEW YORK

A. D. 1765-1790

The contest with New York in regard to land titles was the first of a series of political commotions that arose to disquiet and vex the settlers on the New Hampshire Grants, to turn their thoughts and energies away from the improvement of their little properties, and check their growing prosperity. In this contest the inhabitants of the upper valley of the Connecticut in general took no active part.

They all held their lands under New Hampshire Grants, and as New York never regranted the same lands to other parties, or attempted to dispossess them or molest them in any manner in the quiet enjoyment thereof, they had personally no cause for controversy with the authorities of that province. The town records of Norwich contain no allusion to the vexed questions that occupy so large a space in contemporary history on the west of the Green Mountains, nor do the words "New York" once occur on these records, except in conveyances of land from one person to another, where the property is described as lying in the "Province of New York." The authority and jurisdiction of New York were for the most part quietly ignored. No active partisans of her claims are known to have resided in town, nor did the town "in apprehension of future loss of their landed property," procure at a heavy expense a new charter from the New York government confirming them in possession, as was the case with a large proportion of the towns in what is now Windsor County. The farthest that the town went in apparent recognition of New York jurisdiction,

was in the election of sundry town officers under their New York names, as *supervisors* instead of *selectmen*, *assessors* for *listers*, three commissioners of highways (whose business was to lay out and alter highways), three overseers of the poor, two or more constables, and in 1775 and 1776, a board of three trustees. This fashion prevailed from 1770 to 1776, when they finally disappear from the records, and the good old New England names of town officers—selectmen, listers, constable, etc., were promptly restored, and the other offices of tithing men, haywards, grand jurymen, etc., unknown to municipal government in New York, were filled again. It is worthy of remark, too, that Norwich never changed the time of holding the annual town meeting from March to May, in conformity to New York law and usage, as was done in most of the neighboring towns during the period of New York ascendancy. Soon after Vermont came into being as a State, in 1778, these towns by common consent returned to the ancient practice of March meetings, which they had derived from New Hampshire with their first charters, and which is still preserved in both states.

The influence of New York probably reached its height east of the Green Mountains about 1772 or '73. This was before the arbitrary policy of that province towards the New Hampshire settlers west of the mountains was fully developed, and its actions of ejection and proclamations of outlawry against the leaders of the Green Mountain Boys had everywhere created a feeling of disaffection and dislike to its authority. It was about this time that Peter Olcott emigrated to Norwich and Joseph Marsh to Hartford. Both of these men at once took leading positions in their respective towns, became large land holders, and, there is reason to believe, were at first inclined to look with favor upon the claims of New York to rightful jurisdiction over the New Hampshire Grants.

About this time (May 10, 1772) John Hatch of Norwich was commissioned a justice of the peace by New York and acted as such for several years so far as to take acknowledgment of deeds and authenticate legal papers. Mr. Hatch was the first person to hold the office of magistrate in town, and the only inhabitant who is known to have held civil office under New York appointment. He was ever after familiarly known as *Esquire* John Hatch.\*

In 1772 the town of Hartford took out a charter under New York, as either the same year or earlier did Windsor, Woodstock, Chester, Springfield, Wethersfield, Cavendish, Reading and Plymouth. In all of these towns the forms of government of New York were much in vogue for several years. The fees paid to New York officials for these charters were generally \$2,000, or upwards, against about \$300 originally paid to New Hampshire for a like service; and a quit rent of 2<sup>s</sup> 9<sup>d</sup> sterling on each 100 acres was demanded in place of the 9<sup>d</sup> provided for in the New Hampshire charters. [For specimen of a town charter by New York, see *Vermont History Magazine*, Vol. II, pp. 808-11.] The records of deeds in Norwich witness that there existed for several years, perhaps, some nervousness in the minds of real estate owners, as to the validity of title under New Hampshire grants, inasmuch as in the conveyance of land by deed, the grantor did not usually give an absolute warranty of title, but limited his warrant only against persons claiming by, through or under himself, or the original New Hampshire grantee.

At the first organization of the counties of Cumberland and Gloucester by New York in 1766, out of the territory lying east of the Green Mountain range, Norwich was included in Cumberland County; but a new division was made in 1772, which placed the town, with Sharon and Royalton, within the limits of Gloucester County. The census of the previous year had shown the latter county to contain a population of only 722, while Cumberland County returned 3944—more than one-half the population of Vermont at that time. Newbury, Mooretown [Bradford], Thetford, and Strafford were the only towns in Gloucester County then containing any considerable population.

Earnest efforts were early made by New York to set up the machinery of county government in Gloucester County, but with very indifferent success, although there were some decided partisans of that jurisdiction living in the north part of the county. Appointments of judges, sheriff, and other county officers were made, and the county seat was located at the present town of Washington, in Orange County, which had been granted previous to 1770, by New York to the corporation of King's College, in the city of New York, under the name of

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\*Samuel Partridge held a military commission issued by New York.

Kingsland. The county buildings here consisted of a log jail built at the center of the town some time before it had any permanent inhabitants, and which stood for many years afterwards to be pointed out by the curious as an interesting monument of our early history. Only a single instance is remembered in which this jail was used as a prison. In this case the prisoner had taken along with him a few potatoes for sustenance during his confinement. Finding imprisonment intolerable in that lonely place in the woods, he soon broke jail, but with rare forethought or benevolence he planted the potatoes he had left, for the benefit of future occupants, in front of the jail, where—it is added—they grew spontaneously for years afterwards.

The great distance from the seat of government in New York, and the scanty and scattered population in Gloucester County, probably delayed a complete organization of *county affairs*—so prominent in the New York system of government—such as prevailed for many years in the more populous southern county of Cumberland. There is no evidence that Gloucester County was ever represented in the New York legislative body, either in colonial times or after the rupture with Great Britain. Jacob Bagley of Newbury was chosen a delegate to the New York Congress in 1775, but did not take his seat.

Aside from the town of Kingsland, above mentioned, the only grants of land made by New York in Gloucester county, known to the writer, were the town of Bradford, under the name of Mooretown, in 1770, and the town of Royalton, under the name of Lintfield. Both these townships covered grants previously made by New Hampshire, but for some reason the original grantees in each case seem not to have

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An amusing account of an attempt to hold court at this shire town in the month of February, 1771, by John Peters, clerk, and John Taplin, and John Taplin, Jr., judge and sheriff of the court of common pleas of the county of Gloucester, is found in Volume I, p. 268 of "Government and Council," copied from the Documentary History of New York, wherein it appears as an official record. It reads as follows:—Feb. 25, 1771.—Set out from Mooretown for Kingsland, traveled until night. There being no road and the snow very deep, we traveled on snowshoes or rackets. On the 26th we travelled some ways and held a council, when it was concluded it was best to open court. As we saw no line, it was not known whether in Kingsland or not. But we concluded we were far in the woods; we did not expect to see any house unless we marched three miles within Kingsland, and no one lived there, when the court was ordered to be opened on the spot."—Ten years later the town was regranted (Aug. 8, 1781) to Elisha Burton of Norwich and others, by the legislature of Vermont, under the name of Washington,



availed themselves of their grants for the purpose of settlement, and the same had therefore lapsed, so that no controversy arose concerning the title to lands.

The dealings of the New York authorities in general with the New Hampshire settlers east of the mountains, appear to have been much more temperate and conciliatory from the beginning than with their brethren on the west side, and there is much to support the belief, which has been widely entertained, that such was the studied policy of the New York officials. With this view, separate county governments were erected on the east side, officered from its own people, while the whole western section was annexed to the existing New York counties of Albany and Charlotte, and harassed by writs of ejectment, sheriffs, bosses, and other oppressive measures. And while it is probable that the leading men of Norwich, in common with many in Cumberland and Gloucester Counties, did not exactly approve all the doings of the "Bennington Mob," as the New York officials styled those most active in resisting them, yet when the hour was ripe for a final separation from that justly hated government, and for the erection of the whole of the New Hampshire Grants into a new State, we find Jacob Burton and Thomas Murdock, two influential citizens of the town, sitting as delegates in the General Convention at Westminster January 15-17, 1777, and among the most prominent and active members of that body.

At this convention the decisive step was taken of renouncing at once and forever all political connection with New York, and it was further unanimously "*Voted*, that the district of land commonly called and known by the name of New Hampshire Grants be a new and separate State." A formal Declaration of Independence was drawn up by a committee of five of which Thomas Chittenden and Jacob Burton were members. This committee made report to the convention on the 16th, in the following terms:—"Your committee, to whom was referred the form of a declaration setting forth the right the inhabitants of the New Hampshire Grants have to form themselves into a separate and independent state or government, beg leave to report, viz:

"1 That whenever protection is withheld, no allegiance is due, or can of right be demanded.

"2 That whenever the lives and properties of a part of a community

have been manifestly aimed at by either the legislative or executive authority of such community, necessity requires a separation. Your committee is of opinion that the foregoing has, for many years past, been the conduct of the monopolizing land-traders of the colony of New York, and that they have been not only countenanced, but encouraged, by the legislative and executive authorities of said state or colony. Many overt acts, in evidence of this truth, are so fresh in the minds of members, that it would be needless to name them."

After referring to a resolution of Congress of May 15, 1776, in support of their action, they proceed as follows:—"Your committee, having duly deliberated on the continued conduct of the authority of New York, before recited, and considering that a just right exists in this people to adopt measures for their own security, not only to enable them to secure their rights against the usurpations of Great Britain, but also against that of New York, and the several other governments claiming jurisdiction of this territory, do offer the following

#### DECLARATION

"This convention, whose members are duly chosen by the free voice of their constituents, in the several towns on the New Hampshire Grants, in public meeting assembled, in our own names, and in behalf of our constituents, do hereby proclaim and publicly declare that the district of territory comprehending and usually known by the name and description of the New Hampshire Grants, of right ought to be, and is hereby declared forever hereafter to be considered as a separate, free and independent jurisdiction or state. \* \* \* \* *Furthermore*, we declare by all the ties held sacred among men that we will firmly stand by and support one another in this our declaration of a state, and in endeavoring as much as in us lies to suppress all unlawful routs and disturbances whatever. Also, we will endeavor to secure to every individual his life, peace and property against all unlawful invaders of the same."

Twelve towns east of the Green Mountains were represented in this convention, the first occasion at which delegates from all parts of the Grants were present, and the men of Gloucester and Cumberland here first joined hands in a common cause with the Green Mountain boys of the western section who had so resolutely resisted from the first the



arbitrary and unjust measures of the New York government, and whose determined attitude had doubtless saved them from the consequences of a violent collision with the authorities of that government.

The spirited action of the convention at Westminster led to the calling of another convention which met the following July at Windsor, where a constitution and frame of government were established for the new STATE OF VERMONT,\* whose independence though assailed by powerful foes from many quarters, was maintained through fifteen years of controversy and struggle with a courage and sagacity on the part of its supporters rarely equalled, until on the 4th of March, 1791, "the star that never sets" finally took its place in the constellation of states forming the American Union.

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\*Peter Olcott and Jacob Burton were delegates from Norwich to this Convention.

## CHAPTER IV

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### PROPOSED UNION WITH NEW HAMPSHIRE\*

IN pursuance of votes passed and instructions given by the towns of Newbury, Moretown, Norwich and Hartford, lying on the New Hampshire Grants, so called, west of Connecticut river, proposing to take some measures to be informed of the honorable General Court of New Hampshire, whether a union of the territory aforesaid can be effected with the State of New Hampshire, in consequence of their claim over the same, on terms honorable and mutually beneficial, and appointing Committees from those several towns to meet at Thetford, in order further to consult on the subject and gain information therein in such way and manner as may appear most advisable;—The said Committees being convened in consequence of the votes and instructions aforesaid, after mature deliberation came to the following

#### RESOLUTIONS

“*Resolved*, that it evidently appears to be the wish and desire of the towns above named, as by their votes and instructions is expressed, and also by good information it appears to be the desire of several other towns who have not had opportunity to be represented at this time,—that the territory aforesaid, or part thereof, should be united with the State of N. H. and be under its jurisdiction, provided it can be done on terms honorable and mutually advantageous; and that we therefore think it our duty to enquire of the S<sup>d</sup> Gen. Court of N. H. whether, agreeably to their claim aforesaid, the Territory or Grants above mentioned, or part thereof, may on such terms be united with

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\*In this chapter are recorded the proceedings looking towards a union of the towns of Newbury, Moretown, Norwich and Hartford with the State of New Hampshire after the failure of the Second Vermont Union with New Hampshire towns in 1782. The facts here subjoined are from New Hampshire State Papers.

and become part of S<sup>d</sup> State: and that we imagine such an union might be formed to the general benefit, well being and interest of the whole.

“*Resolved*, that if the Hon. Gen. Court of N. H. are disposed or desirous to extend jurisdiction over the territory aforesaid, or a part thereof, they be earnestly requested to signify their disposition therefor to the several towns in their said claims as soon as conveniently may be, and also manifest their ideas respecting judicial and other proceedings under the authority of Vt. (cases now pending in courts, &c.) ; and if a seasonable adjustment of these last mentioned and other necessary matters can take place, we have full reason to believe and assert, that the greater part of the inhabitants in S<sup>d</sup> territory would readily acknowledge the authority of N. H.—Expecting doubtless at the same time, that some direction or assistance will be afforded in guarding the frontiers—

“*Resolved*, that the following Memorial be transmitted to and laid before the Hon. Gen. Court of N. H. together with these Resolutions, and that Abel Curtis, Esq., be appointed Agent to wait on that honorable Court with the same—And that S<sup>d</sup> Agent be desired and empowered to make and receive such further proposals, agreeable to the tenor hereof, as may then be judged beneficial and expedient.

#### MEMORIAL

“To the Hon. General Court of New Hampshire, to be convened at Concord in and for S<sup>d</sup> State, on the Second Tuesday in June next, the Committees aforesaid, in the name and behalf of the Towns above named, beg leave to represent:—

“(1) That the Grantees and occupants of the greater part of the lands in the territory aforesaid were possessed of titles from the governor of N. H., and were in expectation of continuing under the jurisdiction of that Government—

“That the people in S<sup>d</sup> territory were very unexpectedly and disagreeably involved in difficulties and calamities by being annexed to N. Y. by the royal edict in the year 1764:—out of which they ever were desirous and endeavored to extricate themselves:—but without success until after the memorable American Revolution, when for their mutual benefit and protection against the efforts of internal and external foes they were impelled by necessity to form into a separate jurisdiction.





THE NEWTON INN.  
W. S. BOWLES, PROPRIETOR.



“That necessity and necessity only induced the inhabitants of the Towns above mentioned and many others to unite and continue under the new Government [Vermont], being unjustly deprived of that jurisdiction and protection from N. H. which they had a right to expect and enjoy.

“And while they have esteemed the Congress of the U. S. to be the guardians of the rights of a numerous and free people, and have been ready to stand forth in the defence of and support of the cause of America, they have for a long while looked to them for a settlement of our unhappy disputes; but hitherto to no purpose.

“That while on the one hand we view with keenest anxiety a negotiation on foot with the British [in Canada] greatly to the detriment of the public cause, and tending to our final ruin without a speedy remedy—which we are not at present in a capacity to obtain or afford—on the other hand we may view our rights violated in the most flagrant manner and our liberties trampled upon by a number, without rebuke or remorse.

“And therefore, unless a number of men be raised or afforded for the defence of these frontiers, we must view their situation to be indeed very distressed and unhappy.

“That although we do not wish to involve ourselves under greater disadvantages to obtain relief from our present troubles, we think it our duty nevertheless to inquire whether the jurisdiction of N. H. may not be as real as its claim, and whether the territory aforesaid may not be speedily united with and become a part of that State, on such principles as may be honorable, mutually beneficial and advantageous to the whole. Being persuaded that the S<sup>d</sup> territory on account of its fertility, &c., may greatly add to the wealth and resources of New Hampshire.

“The Committee aforesaid therefore beg that your honors would take the several matters hereinbefore suggested into your wise consideration, and rest assured you will pursue such measures thereupon as will eventually prove for the best good of N. H. and the territory aforesaid, whose interests ought doubtless to be inseparable.

“Signed by order and in behalf of the Committees aforesaid, this 31<sup>st</sup> day of May, A. D. 1782, and in the sixth year of American Independence.

“BILDAD ANDROS, Chairman,”

The above Resolutions and Memorial bear unmistakable internal evidence that they came from the pen of Abel Curtis.

The movement of these four towns was deemed of sufficient importance to occasion Governor Chittenden of Vermont to despatch Col. Ira Allen to Concord to counteract the influence of Mr. Curtis with the General Court of New Hampshire.

See Governor and Council.

## CHAPTER V

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### NORWICH AND DARTMOUTH COLLEGE

Notwithstanding the fact that Norwich had for many years within its borders a collegiate institution of its own, founded and directed by its most distinguished son, the relations of our people towards the sister institution on the opposite bank of the Connecticut were always intimate and friendly.

Dartmouth College had been in successful operation for half a century when Captain Partridge first planted his Military Academy on Norwich Plain in 1820. The town and the college began their existence at about the same time, and during the days of their infancy and weakness had learned to be mutually helpful. Thus the college and the community grew up together. The founders of Norwich, almost without exception, were from the vicinity of Lebanon, Conn., the seat of Rev. Dr. Wheelock's Indian School, and were generally well acquainted personally and by reputation with the venerable founder of the College before he transplanted his school from that town into the wilds of western New Hampshire in the autumn of 1770. There is a current tradition—I know not how authentic it may be—that Doctor Wheelock would himself have preferred to locate his college on the west bank of the river at Norwich instead of at Hanover, had it not been for the fact that Norwich was at that time nominally within the jurisdiction of New York, and lay therefore outside of the territorial limits of that colony which had conferred the charter and corporate existence for the new institution. However that may be, there can be little doubt that as regards its immediate surroundings the college would have been more advantageously situated at Norwich during its earliest years than at Hanover. By the New York census of 1771, Norwich contained 206 inhabitants. A census of

Hanover four years earlier gave that town but ninety-two, and these were located chiefly in the eastern and northern portions. Norwich was dotted with settlers' cabins and little clearings while Hanover Plain was still a dense pine forest. Writing from Hanover, Dec. 7, 1770, President Wheelock says: "My nearest neighbor in town is 2 1-2 miles from me; I can see nothing but the lofty pines about me." Norwich had at that time both saw and grist mills in operation; and it is more than probable that whatever sawed lumber was used in the construction of the first college buildings at Hanover had been rafted across the river from Captain Hatch's or Jacob Burton's saw mills near the mouth of Blood Brook in Norwich.

Although it received its charter from Governor Wentworth in 1769, the college was not definitely located at Hanover until the early summer of 1770, after eight weeks spent by President Wheelock and one or two of the trustees in a personal examination of the valley from Charlestown to Haverhill and many consultations with the leading men of the towns on both sides of Connecticut River. It was at a conference at the house of Jacob Burton in Norwich that this decision was finally reached. While the canvass for the location was going on, subscriptions in aid of the proposed college were solicited from the settlers along the river. The people almost invariably were poor. Many families had scarcely a roof to shelter wife and babies; still, out of their poverty they responded generously to the call. The General Court of Massachusetts is said to have taxed each householder in that colony a peck of meal in 1636, for the endowment of Harvard College; but the pioneer settlers of Norwich did better than that. Their voluntary donations in land and money for the founding of Dartmouth in the summer of 1770 were as follows:

MONEY				MONEY			
	Acres	l	s.		Acres	l	s. d.
Jacob Burton	67	1		Daniel Waterman	24		15
Ebenezer Ball	33			John Slafter	40	1	
Thomas Murdock	33		10	Samuel Hutchinson		2	10
Elisha Crane	33		10	Medad Benton		2	
Philip Smith	33	1		John Hatch		2	10
Capt. Ezekiah Johnson	80	1		Samuel Partridge		2	5
John Sargent	40	2	10	Elisha Partridge			10
Timothy Bush	40	2		Jonas Richards			10
Peter Thatcher	40		15	Joseph Hatch	33	1	

MONEY					MONEY				
	Acres	&	s.	d.		Acres	&	s.	d.
Josiah Burton	20				Aaron Wright			1	10
Israel Brown	27		10		Francis Smalley			1	
Daniel Baldwin	13		10		Joseph Ball			1	
Francis Fenton	33				Jona Ball				5
John Hutchinson			1	10	Samuel Brown			2	5
Elisha Burton			1	10	Samuel Waterman			7	6
Nathan Messenger					Samuel Partridge, Jr.			10	
John Wright			1		Ebenezar Jaques			7	6

These donations amounted to 589 acres of land and 35 pounds, 15 shillings in cash. There were other gifts during the years immediately following as well as contributions of labor and materials from time to time—from such as had nothing else to give.

Nor does it appear that the infant settlement failed to endow the college in a higher sense. To Dartmouth went the bright boys of the Norwich pioneers for an education. The distinction belongs to Norwich of furnishing the first graduate from Vermont. No brighter intellects are found upon the rolls of the institution during the first decade of its history than those of Abel Curtis and Asa Burton. More than thirty descendants of the twenty-four families represented in the list of contributors above given have since received the honors of the college; and if we admit a dozen other families that settled in Norwich previous to 1780, the number is increased to upwards of fifty who have been thus honored.

The principal men of Norwich were in close alliance with the authorities of Dartmouth College in promoting an interesting political movement (the secret history of which has never been fully written) that was industriously worked for about six years following 1776. This was a scheme to form a new state in the upper valley of the Connecticut, to include the New Hampshire Grants on both sides of the river, whose capital should be Hanover or some town centrally located on the east or west bank, and whose intellectual and educational center should be Dartmouth College. This was by no means the visionary scheme it would now appear to be. As affairs then stood, it had much to recommend it; but the project failed in spite of the able and earnest efforts of its supporters (who comprised a large majority of the most influential people in the river towns), chiefly because fate and Ira and Ethan Allen of the new State of Vermont were against it. It



was but a natural result, however, of their mutual labors and sacrifices for this "lost cause," that the town and the college should be drawn closer together in sympathy and in friendly offices.

Local influences, it is fair to presume, had some share in securing to Dartmouth College from the legislature of Vermont, at its session at Norwich in June, 1785, the grant of a full township of land in Caledonia County (named Wheelock in honor of the founder of the college), the rents and profits of which have ever since accrued to the benefit of the college. A few years earlier, when Vermont extended her jurisdiction over the New Hampshire Grants east of the Connecticut River, the district of Dresden was admitted to representation in the legislature as a distinct municipality, embracing the corporation of Dartmouth College—a privilege never accorded by New Hampshire itself.

Out of a multitude of facts and circumstances like those above noted the conviction was early established in the minds of a large majority of the people of eastern Vermont, that they and the people of New Hampshire had a common interest in Dartmouth College. The amount of patronage which Vermont has given to that institution in supplying it with students has accordingly been second only to that of New Hampshire, to the serious detriment, it must be confessed, of our own State University at Burlington. Indeed, it may be questioned whether more Vermont young men have not sought an education there than at both of our Vermont colleges. The proportion of Vermonters in the several classes of the academic department during the last fifteen years at Dartmouth, has averaged about one quarter of the whole number in attendance, while that of New Hampshire has been less than one third. In some of the classes between the years 1870 and 1880, the proportion from Vermont was from thirty to forty per cent of the whole. Of the class that graduated in 1879 not less than forty-one per cent were Vermonters.

Among the acts passed by the legislature of our State, while in session at Norwich, in June, 1785, was one granting 23,000 acres of land to the Trustees of Dartmouth College, and the President of Moor's Charity School. By this act the Governor and Council were requested to issue a charter of incorporation for the same, when so surveyed, and in pursuance of that request, that land was chartered under the name of Wheelock.

## CHAPTER VI

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### HANOVER BRIDGE

The earliest form of transportation across the Connecticut River between Norwich and Hanover of which we have any information was the canoe of Nathan Messenger, who some time in the summer of the year 1765 established a hunting camp near the bank of the river, a few rods south of where the west end of Hanover bridge now is. In this canoe the family and household goods of John Hutchinson were brought over from the Hanover side in the late fall of the same year, at the completion of their long journey from Ashford, Conn., to their new home. This family, with that of Mr. Messenger, were the first white persons known to have passed the winter in Norwich, occupying together the log hut of Mr. Messenger. Jerome Hutchinson, a son of John, then a child of about three years, was fond in his old age of recounting his recollections of crossing the river on that occasion, some incidents of which never faded from his memory. The grotesque appearance in the water of an old white-faced cow (which the family had driven from Connecticut) as she swam behind the canoe during the passage of the river, was indelibly fixed in his mind. Mrs. Messenger, at her home on the Norwich side of the river, was first made aware of the arrival of the Hutchinsons by hearing the cry of their baby from the opposite bank, which she afterwards declared was "the sweetest music she ever heard," breaking thus unexpectedly the stillness of her solitary life in the woods.

After the founding of Dartmouth College and the settlement of adjacent parts of Hanover five years later, enlarged facilities for crossing the river were doubtless provided. The first allusion to a ferry at this point is found in the town records of 1778 when a public high-

way was laid "from the Ferry place near Mr. John Sargent's to the Meetinghouse in Norwich," the building of which was commenced that year. Parties of volunteer soldiers are remembered to have crossed here in October, 1780, going to the pursuit of the Indians at the time of the burning of Royalton.

Although the west bank of the Connecticut River had been recognized from the earliest times as the western boundary of New Hampshire, the town of Norwich for many years vigorously asserted and maintained its right to one-half of the privilege of a ferry between Norwich and Hanover. The exclusive privilege or franchise of operating a ferry at this place (and afterwards of building a bridge) was early conferred by the New Hampshire government upon the Trustees of Dartmouth College; but the Norwich authorities were slow to give up what they regarded their just rights in the matter. During the existence of the Second Union of New Hampshire towns with Vermont, the ferry seems to have been wholly in the possession and under the control of Norwich.

At a town meeting held March 25, 1782, it was voted "that a committee of three be appointed to take the care and management of the Ferry by Mr. John Sargent's leading to Dresden, in behalf of the Town as our property, it being found that great inconveniences have arisen for want of faithful attendance. And that s<sup>d</sup> committee be desired and empowered to lease out or dispose of the same for the term of one year next coming to such person as will give good security for constant and faithful attendance. And such committee is further desired to engage such person the quiet and unmolested possession of the Ferry for said term of one year, and that they immediately procure a boat for that purpose. The committee chosen: Capt. Joseph Hatch, Maj. Elisha Burton and Nath<sup>l</sup> Brown, Esq." It is apparent, however, that before the end of the year the claims of the town were contested by parties in Hanover, for in the record of the annual town meeting, March 4, 1783, we find the following entry: "A letter from Capt. [Aaron] Storrs respecting the Ferry was read. And the question thereupon put by Bezaleel Woodward Esquire to the meeting, Whether the Town will agree to sell the boat put in by the town at said Ferry to Capt. Storrs? It passed unanimously in the negative." A committee was then appointed to take charge of the boat and ferry

for the ensuing year, and again to offer the trustees of the college the privilege of one-half of the ferry; and in case this offer should be declined, "to lease out said boat and ferry in such way as they may judge most beneficial to the town and the public." Nothing seems to have come of these negotiations, and a year later (March 15, 1784) a vote was carried in town meeting, "that the Committee who were appointed to build the boat two years ago for a Ferryboat between this town and Dresden, be directed to lock up said boat and dispose of the same to the best advantage"; and from thenceforth we hear no more of the town of Norwich attempting to hold or control the ferry.

The first bridge across the Connecticut River between the states of Vermont and New Hampshire was built at Bellows Falls in the year 1785, by Colonel Enoch Hale, of Walpole. This was the only bridge on the river north of Massachusetts until 1796, when bridges were completed between Windsor and Cornish and between Norwich and Hanover.\* About the year 1794, a charter was granted by the legislature of New Hampshire to build a toll bridge on the river between Hanover and Norwich. That was not the first effort, however, to build a bridge at this point. More than ten years before (March, 1783), the town of Norwich appointed a committee "to act with the Trustees of Dartmouth College respecting the expediency of endeavoring to obtain a Lottery, for the purpose of erecting a Bridge between this town and Dresden, and [to see] whether measures may not be entered into to effect such a design." This effort was not successful and it was not till 1796 that the towns were finally united by a bridge.

The town of Norwich does not appear to have been at all suited with the project of building a *toll bridge*. At its annual town meeting, March 8, 1796, it was voted unanimously, "that we wish there might be a free bridge built over the river Connecticut at the ferry at Doctor Lewis'; and in case we cannot have a free Bridge built there, we rather have a ferry kept there than to have a toll bridge built." A committee,

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\*The Lyman Bridge between Hartford and Lebanon was commenced in 1797 and completed in 1802; that between Fairlee and Orford the same year; between Newbury and Haverhill in 1806; Cheshire Bridge, 1805; between Westminster and Walpole, 1807; Brattleboro and Hindsdale, 1804; Lyme Bridge, 1822; Gilbert's Bridge, 1839.—The Connecticut River was bridged at Hartford, Conn., as early as 1777. Charles River was first bridged between Boston and Charlestown in 1786. Cambridge Bridge was completed in 1794, and Craigie's Bridge a few years later.



consisting of Captain Joseph Hatch, Doctor Joseph Lewis and Colonel David Curtis, was at the same time chosen "to open subscriptions for the purpose of receiving any sum or sums of money or obligations for the express purpose of building a free Bridge over the river Connecticut near Doctor Joseph Lewis'." This committee was also directed "forthwith to apply to the selectmen of the town of Hanover, to lay out a sufficient Highway from the College Plain to the river, with sufficient land adjoining the river at the most proper and convenient place for erecting an abutment on that side of the river for a free bridge." The people of Norwich did finally get the free bridge they longed for, and very much in the manner they then sought it, but it was still a long distance in the future. Three successive toll bridges rose and disappeared and more than half a century of time intervened, before that consummation was reached.\*

To the towns of Norwich and Hanover belongs the credit of opening the *first free bridge* over the Connecticut River between Vermont and New Hampshire. After much discussion and agitation of the subject in town meetings and elsewhere, the Bridge Company, in November, 1858, offered to surrender its charter provided the sum of \$800 was subscribed by the citizens. This was promptly done, and early in the season of 1859, the present free bridge was built by the joint action and contributions of the two towns. Its cost was about \$6,500. It was opened for travel in June, and on the first of July it was formally dedicated by public observances under the name of the "Ledyard Free

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\*The architect of the first bridge was Richard Graves, a graduate of Dartmouth College in 1791. It was built with a single span, without any supporting pier, the floor of the bridge forming an inclined plane upwards from each abutment to the middle of the structure. It was constructed of green pine timber and did not prove a success, but fell into the river from its own weight after a few years. A second toll bridge soon succeeded, which stood over thirty years, till worn out by age and use. The third toll bridge, built in 1839, was burned in the fall of 1853. Neither of the toll bridges was a covered bridge. After the destruction of the third bridge a ferry was maintained by the Bridge Company till the completion of the present covered bridge in 1859 by Deacon Brown of Claremont, N. H. Two ferries were supported in early times between Norwich and Hanover, north of the site of Hanover Bridge. One, called the "Rope Ferry," was located just below the island in the river near Mr. Samuel Hutchinson's, connecting there with a public highway which entered the main street of the village of Hanover through what is now known as "Faculty Avenue." Another, which was in use till about 1840, was about a mile south of the mouth of Pompanoosuc River. A third, in operation as early as 1796, and near the north line of the town, was called Rogers' Ferry, probably from Ensign John Rogers, who settled very early in that part of the town.



Bridge." A public meeting was held on that day at the College Church in Hanover, at which speeches were made in commemoration of the event by Professors E. D. Sanborn and J. W. Patterson, and W. H. Duncan, Esq., of Hanover, and by President Edward Bourns of Norwich. The occasion was one of much interest, and general rejoicing was manifested. The bridge has now stood for nearly half a century, without accident or costly repairs, for the free use of the traveling public. It is 400 feet in length, and about forty feet above the river at low water. The larger part of the cost of building and maintenance was assumed by the town of Hanover.

## CHAPTER VII

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### CHURCH HISTORY

The great achievement of the first generation of Norwich settlers was the building of a meeting house. More than any other event of the time, with the possible exception of the accomplishment of the national independence, this was an undertaking that enlisted the energies and taxed the resources of our forefathers.

The building of a meeting house in a New England frontier settlement a century ago was regarded a matter of public concern, to be supported by the whole community without regard to sect or party, like the opening of roads or any other public charge. In less than ten years from the time the first clearing was made in Norwich, the preliminary steps were taken to provide a meeting house to be used for the accommodation of the whole people in the public worship of God. The question of the location of this building was sharply agitated, resulting in a keen competition between different sections of the town for the coveted distinction, inasmuch as the location of the house was supposed to fix the site of a possible future village where much of the business of the town would be transacted. When it became apparent that no agreement could be reached, a locating committee of three men from out of town was chosen and summoned upon the ground to decide where the meeting house should stand. The formal report of this Committee as made at the time has recently been found among the papers of the late W. H. Duncan, Esq., of Hanover, N. H., and by the kindness of Honorable Frederick Chase has been furnished to the writer. It is printed below in full as a curiosity of the times to which it relates:

“REPORT OF A COMMITTEE, LOCATING THE FIRST MEETING HOUSE IN  
NORWICH, A. D. 1773.

“We, the subscribers, being by the inhabitants of the township of Norwich, County of Gloucester in the province of New York, on the twelfth day of October inst. appointed a Committee to examine and find out the best and most convenient spot to build a meeting house on for the public worship of God in s<sup>d</sup> town and on their appointment and call we met in said town on the 28<sup>th</sup> day of Oct. inst., and according to the instructions given us by s<sup>d</sup> inhabitants we carefully viewed s<sup>d</sup> township and the inhabitants thereof, and heard all parties concerned touching the premises and considered the same, and are of opinion that the best and most suitable place to build s<sup>d</sup> house on is upon the 9<sup>th</sup> Lot in the second Range of 100 acre divisions, about 20 rods a little North of West from Capt. [Peter] Olcott’s dwelling house, on the north side of the highway—s<sup>d</sup> house to include a stake set up by us marked “M. H.”—All which is agreed upon by your most obedient, humble servants.

[Dated] Oct. 30, 1773,

“Signed

“SAMUEL GILBERT,*	} Com- mittee.”
“CHARLES HILL,	
“SETH WRIGHT.	

The situation for a site as made by the Committee, was the occasion of considerable dissatisfaction, it is said, especially among the inhabitants of an elevated tract of land lying west of the present village of Norwich, which had been settled and improved by a company of families from Preston, Conn., as early as the summer of 1766, who had made a resolute effort to secure the meeting house in their own immediate neighborhood nearer to the geographical center of the town. The temporary disaffection gave to the tract above described the name of “Judgment Hill,” an appellation conferred upon it by Lieutenant Governor Olcott, and which it retained for many years. Possibly the Preston people (among whom were Aaron and John Wright, John

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\*Colonel Samuel Gilbert was one of the original proprietors and first settlers of Lyme, N. H. He came from Hebron, Conn. Charles Hill was an early settler in Lebanon, N. H. Mr. Wright was probably from Hanover.

Hatch, Samuel Partridge, Samuel Partridge, Jr., and Israel Brown and Jonas Richards) thought the hand of Captain Olcott, a new-comer who had then resided in town only about a year, rather too prominent in settling this matter. But he gave liberally of his large means for the promotion of the enterprise, and soon after conveyed to the town as a free gift the land for a meeting house lot and for the public burial ground adjoining.

The point where the committee set their stake, and where the meeting house was subsequently built, was a short distance southeast of the site of the second meeting house built in 1817, the outlines of which are still distinctly visible. The first house stood directly in front of the old cemetery and nearly in line with the old brick schoolhouse still standing near. The surface of the ground where it stood seems to have been disturbed in later years and made more uneven. The war of the Revolution, with its anxieties and alarms, soon interposed to delay the consummation of cherished hopes in regard to the meeting house. The foundations of the new edifice were finally laid—with appropriate observances, no doubt—July 9, 1778. Meanwhile a young minister, Reverend Lyman Potter, had been settled over the church and the town, the installation ceremonies being performed in the open air, upon the spot chosen for the future temple, but then a primitive forest, on the 31st of August, 1775.\*

The building of the meeting house advanced with slow and halting steps for several years. The people were poor and their burdens and sacrifices many and severe. Within a year, however, from the laying of the foundations, the frame was up, covered with rough boards and the roof put on. In this condition the building was used for a town meeting, July 15, 1779, for the first time, and thenceforth was habitually so used except in the coldest winter months when town meetings were held at some dwelling house near by, usually at Colonel Olcott's, where they had previously convened since 1773. During 1779 roads were also laid out from different points in town centering at the meeting house. Among the most important of these was one from the ferry where Hanover Bridge now is to the meeting house,

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\*Reverend Isaiah Potter, brother of Lyman Potter and the first minister of Lebanon, N. H., was settled there in 1773, the installation services taking place (August 25) under a large elm tree on the bank of the Connecticut.

and thence through the town to Thetford line. These roads, which were not completed for some time after, were laid by a special committee, chosen for the purpose, consisting of John Hatch, surveyor, assisted by Abel Curtis, Philip Smith, Nathaniel Brown and Gersham Bartlett.

Nothing further seems to have been done on the meeting house until the spring of 1780, when at a town meeting held April 23th, a Committee was chosen consisting of Elisha Burton, Nath<sup>l</sup> Brown and John Hopson, "to lay out the subscriptions raised towards furnishing the meeting house"; and the committee were directed "to finish the outside of the building, glaze the lower part if possible, lay the lower floor, build the pulpit, and proceed to make the pews, etc., if there be money sufficient raised." Lack of funds doubtless prevented the full execution of these directions, as a year and a half later the pews at least had not been built, and a proposition was accordingly brought forward and adopted in town meeting Oct. 4, 1781, to sell the pews, or the "pew ground," at auction, in advance of their construction. The floor of the house was then divided into thirty pew spaces, and twenty-six of these were sold on the spot at prices ranging from £8 to £31 each, the whole amount realized from the sale being £472, 10 shillings. Only a small part of this gross sum, however, was available for future work, since purchasers of pews were to be credited on their payments for whatever money or materials or labor each one had previously contributed towards the building of the meeting house. Enough was obtained for the immediate purpose, and accordingly the pews were put in early in the following year. At the sale of the pews it had been agreed that three families should occupy each pew, but this arrangement soon proved unsatisfactory, and a town meeting was called by the meeting house committee Sept. 3, 1782, at which the following action was taken:

"Whereas, it is found that to have only three Families in a pew, as was formerly proposed, will not accommodate the whole of the families in town with seats; therefore

"Voted that five Families be desired to sit in each of the Pews in the meeting house, which have been or are to be sold, except the five smallest pews, in which four families are to be accommodated."

The pews in this meeting house were undoubtedly built in the large,



square form prevalent in those times, but to think of *five families* of the size then common stowed away in a single pew, and to recall the then almost universal habit of church attendance, suggests a density of population quite unknown to our day. In the summer of 1784 the seating capacity of the meeting house was considerably enlarged by the finishing of the gallery and the building of fourteen pews therein. Glass windows were then put into the gallery for the first time. Measures were also taken the same season for the substantial completion of the whole interior of the building. At a town meeting held in connection with Freeman's Meeting, Sept. 7, 1784, it was voted "that the Meeting house be finished off by lathing and plastering and whitewashing the walls and overhead." Major Burton, the chairman of the building committee, was at the same time directed "to contract with Lieut. John Hopson, to finish the meeting house completely, and to engage him the sum of £100 for the same." This expenditure had been provided for by the sale of the gallery pews by vendue the April preceding, which realized the sum of £191-8s.-6d. On that occasion purchasers of pews were required "to give their notes payable next December in wheat at five shillings per bushel, for such sums as they may be sold for."

Probably the finishing touches were not given to the meeting house before the spring of 1785. Seven years had it been in building—seven dark and trying years, a period equal to that required for building Solomon's temple. Now that it was at last finished and stood complete before their eyes, our fathers may be pardoned if they looked upon the work of their hands with some degree of pride and affection. It was reputed at that time to be the best meeting house in the State. Doubtless there followed a formal dedication of the structure to public and pious uses, although no record or tradition of such an event has come to our notice; still one might say it was already dedicated in a higher sense through the self-denying spirit and the consecration of purpose that had wrought so long and so valiantly for it. The whole cost of the house was computed to be £694, or about \$2,300 of our money. Very little money, however, was used in its construction, which was carried on almost entirely by means of direct contributions of labor and materials furnished by the townspeople.

A notable event in the history of the town soon occurred to signalize

the completion of the new meeting house—the meeting of the Vermont Legislature at Norwich for an adjourned session, in June, 1785. This body then consisted of a Council of twelve members, and a House of Representatives of about 100. Only about sixty members of the lower house appear to have been in attendance at this session, which lasted sixteen days (June 2-18). The representatives assembled in the meeting house for their daily sittings, while the Council were accommodated at the house of Daniel Buck close at hand. Peter Olcott and Thomas Murdock of Norwich were members of the Council at this time, and Elisha Burton and Elijah Gates represented the town in the assembly, the state constitution then allowing two representatives to such towns as contained over eighty taxable inhabitants. Daniel Buck, a young lawyer just settled in town, was chosen Secretary *pro tem* of the Council. Other members of the Council present were Ira Allen, then also treasurer of the state (this was not Colonel Allen's first visit to Norwich on a political mission); and Moses Robinson of Bennington, who succeeded Thomas Chittenden as governor four years later, who had already served five years as chief judge of the Supreme Court of the State, and who was elected in 1791 one of the first Vermont senators in the Congress of the United States. Hon. Paul Spooner of Hartland, as Lieutenant Governor, was the presiding officer of the Council. John Throop of Pomfret, three years a Supreme Court judge, and Benjamin Emmons of Woodstock were also members. The Speaker of the assembly was Nathaniel Niles of Fairlee. Speaker Niles was then serving his second term as judge of the Supreme Court and was soon to be chosen the first representative in Congress from the Eastern District of the State. On the floor of that house were many of the strong men whose names illuminate the early history of Vermont. Among them was Stephen R. Bradley of Westminster, thrice chosen U. S. Senator from Vermont, and that staunch Federalist, Isaac Tichenor, twice chosen to the same office and eleven years governor. There also were Nathaniel Chipman, afterwards six years a senator in Congress, and six years judge in the Supreme Court of the State, three of which he was chief judge; and Samuel Knight of Brattleboro, four years judge in the same court and three years chief judge. Joshua Hazen and Wm. Tilden were representatives

from Hartford at this session, Beriah Loomis from Thetford, and Roger Enos and William Gallup from Hartland.

It needs a lively imagination for one who stands to-day on that naked and desolate hilltop, to carry back the mind and picture to oneself the scene presented at the gathering of the Vermont legislature more than one hundred years ago, on that now lonely spot. History records that the ceremonies usual to such occasions were not omitted—that the governor, lieutenant governor, and other prominent officials came to town attended by a cavalry escort, and were received by a body of the local militia under the command of Colonel Paul Brigham. The whole number of members and officers belonging to the legislature probably did not exceed 100. One almost wonders where even these found comfortable lodgings, as nowhere in town was there a regular hotel, or any collection of dwellings that would even suggest the idea of a village. “Burton’s Plain,” as the site of Norwich village was then called, possessed only three or four houses. But the reputation of the town for hospitality was good, and the distinguished strangers who did not find entertainment at the homes of the resident legislators, were probably quartered at the nearest farmhouses. Members of the legislature did not journey to the capital in Pullman cars in those days, but on horseback with such baggage only as could be carried in a pair of saddlebags. It is doubtful if the first four-wheeled carriage had then rolled into Norwich. It is possible that Colonel Olcott and one or two others might have owned a chaise. Such roads as then existed were mere cart tracks through the woods, emerging here and there into a narrow clearing full of blackened tree stumps.

A number of important measures were enacted into law during the brief session of the legislature at Norwich. Questions of greater magnitude or wider interest have seldom come before our legislative bodies in later years. Vermont was at that time to all intents and purposes an independent sovereignty. Congress had rudely repelled her overtures for admission into the Confederacy of States. Her legislators had to attend not only to local affairs but to the international relations of the state as well. On June 7, Colonel Ira Allen submitted to the legislature a report of his mission to Canada the previous winter for the purpose of negotiating with the government of the Province of Quebec a treaty for the establishment of a free trade to and through

that province to the countries of Europe, and in furtherance of this end to secure the cutting of a ship-canal to connect the waters of Lake Champlain with those of the St. Lawrence. An act was passed granting to Reuben Harmon, Jr., the right to coin hard money. The same legislature passed a naturalization act, laws for the establishment of post offices and mail routes, and other acts of sovereignty. A township of land was granted to Dartmouth College and Moor's Charity School, the rents and profits of which were devoted to "the use of said college and school forever." A law called the "Betterment Act," which had been debated for several sessions, and upon which public opinion was much divided, received its final shape at this session. This measure secured to actual settlers the value of their improvements in cases where the titles to their lands proved defective. It is interesting to note that the Norwich representatives took opposite views of its merits, Mr. Burton voting for the bill on its passage and Mr. Gates against it. Among acts of local interest passed at this session was the incorporation of the Windsor County Grammar School and its location at Norwich, where it remained until its removal to Royalton in 1807. A tax of three pence per acre upon all private lands in Thetford was voted for the purpose of building a meeting house in said town.

"The Ministerial Act," as it was called, for the building of meeting houses and the support of preaching by a tax upon the property and polls of the inhabitants of towns, was passed by the legislature of Vermont at its session at Westminster, in October, 1783. The Norwich meeting house had been built, as we have seen, wholly by the voluntary contributions of the people. It was decided, however, in the fall of 1785, that the cost of the building should be assumed by the town, under the provisions of this law, and so become the town's property. At a special town meeting held for that purpose, on the first Tuesday of October, it was accordingly *voted*: "That the sum of £694, Lawful Money, be raised by a Tax on the Polls and Rateable Estates of the inhabitants of the town of Norwich, upon the List of 1784 (excepting those who are of a Different Sentiment from those who meet at this House for Public Worship); which Tax as aforesaid shall be paid in hard money, wheat at five shillings per bushel or other grain equivalent, pork or beef at the market price, or certificates from the Committee who have had the care of building the Meeting house,



that they have paid such sums as are specified in <sup>s<sup>d</sup></sup> certificates, for pews and seats in said House—which certificates shall be taken by the collectors for his, her or their rates.” In the impoverished condition of the country at that time, such a tax must have been a serious matter to those persons who had not contributed to the building of the meeting house, and especially as a subsequent vote required its payment into the treasury within one month. The avails of the tax were of course very largely in the form of outstanding certificates, but it resulted in an equalization of the expense of building the meeting house upon the whole town. Such as had paid by voluntary contributions more than an equal share, according to their several lists, had such excess repaid to them, unless they chose to retain the pews which they had bought, in which case nothing was repaid.

The meeting house having thus become the property of the town, a general redistribution of seats was made necessary. This was effected by a committee of seven men chosen for that purpose, consisting of Samuel Hutchinson, Hezekiah Johnson, Thomas Murdock, Jacob Burton, John Burnap, Paul Brigham and Elisha Burton. It was voted that the rule to be observed in seating the congregation should be *age* and *interest*—an arrangement that probably brought the older people into the front seats, and gave some degree of choice to the larger taxpayers.

The “Ministerial Act,” so called, was maintained in full force in Vermont until 1801, when it was essentially modified. During this period, which covered the whole of Rev. Mr. Potter’s ministry in Norwich, the inhabitants of the town were practically united in the observances of religion, and were constantly and statedly assembled under one roof for worship and religious instruction. For twenty years, beginning in 1781, the salary of Mr. Potter (usually fixed at £75) was annually voted in town meeting, a special tax therefor made on the grand list of the taxpayers of the town, and its collection rigidly enforced against all who failed to show that they were communicants of another and different church. Proof of this was required by the production of an authentic certificate from the clerk or other officer of such church, setting forth the fact of such membership, and was available as a matter of fact only to a few Baptists living mostly in the western part of the town. Church and State were



in close alliance and walked hand in hand. Sunday after Sunday and year after year, in summer and winter, great congregations of old and young, rich and poor, were gathered from all parts of the town, where the tabernacle of their faith had been set up, there to participate in a common service of prayer and praise, and to exchange friendly greetings with neighbors and townsfolk.

Even the accessories of worship, such as music, were carefully provided for in town meeting. It is interesting to read, upon the pages that record the business transacted by our ancestors on such occasions, entries like the following: "Mr. Benjamin Hatch requested that some Persons be appointed to assist in tuning the psalm on Sundays, etc. *Voted*, that M<sup>r</sup>. Benj. Burton, M<sup>r</sup>. Joel Stimson, and M<sup>r</sup> John Burton be desired to assist as choristers." At the annual March meeting in 1791, it was voted "that there be a Committee of five to promote singing the year ensuing, by taking in subscriptions, etc. Chose Sam<sup>l</sup> Hutchinson, John Hatch, Jr., Constant Murdock, Hezekiah Goodrich and Bliss Thatcher such committee."

No data have been found showing the dimensions upon the ground or the seating capacity of the first meeting house. As originally built it contained upwards of forty pews, upon the floor and in the gallery. Probably ten persons to a pew would not be thought an excessive allowance for its seating capacity. There is little doubt that the building was often made to accommodate (by the aid of movable seats or otherwise) a much larger number. It was a substantial frame building, clapboarded without and plainly finished within, but without steeple or bell. One who remembers it well as it appeared in the days of his boyhood, thinks the outside at least was never painted; but it appears from the town records that in December, 1791, a tax of £50 was levied for that purpose, "S<sup>d</sup> tax to be paid one half in wheat and one half in flaxseed at cash price." At the same time it was voted "to have the Meeting house underpinned with as good natural-faced stone and pointed with lime mortar as the Chapel at the College,—with good stone steps, well faced with as good stone as can be provided in this town." As was usual in the New England meeting houses of its time, there was no provision for heating in winter, whatever artificial heat was enjoyed by its occupants being derived from

the diminutive foot-stoves that our great-grandmothers carried with them to church.

It is not strange that having served its purpose for nearly forty years, the meeting house should come to be considered a little antiquated and a demand arise for something better. Since its foundations were laid in 1778, the town had more than doubled in population and in wealth. A new minister, Rev. James W. Woodward, had been settled in 1804 as the successor of Mr. Potter, and though supported only by the voluntary offerings of the congregation, had succeeded after a ministry of a dozen years to more than the esteem and regard bestowed upon his predecessor. The desire for improvement took shape in the summer of 1817, in the erection of a new and more commodious meeting house (40 by 60 feet on the ground), near the site of the old one. On the 24th of December that historic old building wherein the pious aspirations of two generations of worshippers had found a voice, and where the fathers of the town had so often formulated their ideas of civil policy in town and state—a building that to Norwich stood for all that Faneuil Hall and the Old South Church together stood to Boston—was sold to Constant Murdock, the highest bidder, for \$100. The Sunday following (Dec. 28, 1817) services were held in it for the last time. A commemorative discourse was pronounced by the pastor, Mr. Woodward, on that occasion, a few passages from which, characteristic of the speaker and well befitting the hour, we gladly quote: "Towards this house," said Mr. W., "which for the space of nearly forty years has been devoted to religious uses, with those who have here united in divine worship, peculiar emotions must be excited whilst we are met for the last time within its sacred walls. Who, that ever received pleasure in a visit to this sanctuary, in reflecting upon the times in which he has ascended this hill of the Lord, must not be ready to acknowledge his attachment to its homely walls?"

"In reflecting upon past scenes it will be natural to call to mind the names of those who have met with us in this place. Of those who were concerned in the building of this house, or were original proprietors, the greater part have fallen asleep. We may here and there behold one who saw in youth its early glory while it stood encircled by the forest. A few hoary heads are still waiting at this gate of wisdom, whose ears were addressed by the first messages of God communi-

cated from this desk. The most of their contemporaries are gone. Among the early occupants who have died, are the names of Waterman, Bartlett, Olcott, Hatch, Richards, Partridge, Hutchinson, Smalley, Boardman, Murdock, Loveland, Bush, Burton, Hopson, Brown, Goodrich, Stimson, Morse, Percival, Wright, Thatcher. Their places have been filled by their successors, many of whom also have gone the way of their fathers, from which there is no return. \* \* \* The whole number of which the church has been composed is a little less than 300. Of seven deacons, successively chosen to officiate in its temporal concerns, four have died—Joseph Smalley, John Burnap, Nathaniel Brown and Jonas Boardman.

“This house is endeared to me by a thousand recollections of which I have been the unworthy partaker. Has any benefit accrued from my labors, this you should refer to the giver of every good and perfect gift. For I consider it among the choicest mercies of my life, if I have been used as an instrument in any degree of promoting your Spiritual welfare. \* \* \* \* Let us never forget, my hearers, the goodness of the Lord. If we are ever permitted to tread the ground upon which this house now stands, let us revere this spot of earth from the remembrance of the merciful kindness of God to us and to our fathers who have frequented this holy tabernacle.”

## CHAPTER VIII

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### CHURCH HISTORY CONCLUDED

The present meeting house at Norwich Plain\* was built in 1817, and dedicated November 20th of the same year. On the following day, Reverend R. W. Bailey was ordained pastor and continued as such till November, 1823, when he was dismissed. The ordination sermon was preached by Nathan Perkins, Jr., A. M., pastor of the Second Church in Amherst, Mass., from Isaiah LXII, 6-7.—“I have set watchmen upon thy walls, O Jerusalem, which shall never hold their peace day nor night; ye that make mention of the Lord, keep not silence, and give him no rest till he establish, and till he make Jerusalem a praise in the earth.” Mr. Bailey was afterwards settled in Pittsfield, Mass., and later became president of Austin College, Texas.

The church, which consisted at its organization of only eleven members, was quite small at the outset, increased during the ministry of Mr. Bailey to an aggregate of forty-seven members.

After the dismissal of Mr. Bailey, the pulpit was supplied by Reverends James W. Woodward and J. R. Wheelock, and by Reverend Doctor Roswell Shurtleff till December, 1831, when Reverend Thomas Hall was installed pastor and continued with the church about three years. Under the ministry of Mr. Wheelock thirty-three, and during that of Mr. Hall nineteen members were added to the church.

After 1834 Reverend Doctor Shurtleff again supplied the church, preaching for about six years. During the ministry of Doctor Shurtleff there were two considerable revivals of religion, one in March, 1835, conducted by the famous Jedediah Burchard, continuing

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\*The writer is informed that the architect of the building was Ammi B. Young, who planned the additions to the White House at Washington, D. C.

eighteen days, the second in June, 1839, under the direction of Reverend Sherman Kellogg. During Doctor Shurtleff's ministry 116 members were added to the church.

From 1840 to 1853 the church had no permanent minister, the pulpit being supplied mainly by Reverends J. D. Butler, Sherman Kellogg, David Kimball, and Professors Haddock, Noyes and Brown of Dartmouth College.

In 1844, on the dissolution of the church at North Hartford, twelve of its members became united with the church at Norwich. On Jan. 2, 1855, Reverend A. G. Pease was duly installed pastor of the church, and so continued till July, 1857, when he was succeeded by Reverend S. W. Boardman, who continued till September, 1859, to be followed by Reverend Austin Hazen (March 28, 1860). Mr. Hazen was dismissed March 24, 1864.

Mr. Pease and Mr. Boardman were dismissed at their own request, the former on account of continued ill health and the latter to accept a professorship in Middlebury College.

The dissolution of the North Church in 1854 resulted in a large accession to the church at Norwich Plain, amounting to over sixty members. During the ministry of Mr. Hazen twenty-three united with the church. In 1859 the total membership of this church had increased to 261 persons.

The church was again supplied with preaching mostly by the President and Professors of Dartmouth College, until June, 1865, when Reverend William Sewall, then of Lunenburg, Vt., was invited to supply the pulpit. The services of Mr. Sewall proving acceptable, he was duly installed as minister Sept. 27, 1866. His connection with the church continued till Oct. 27, 1876, during which time there were more than one hundred names added to the church (sixty-two by profession and forty-seven by letter).

From the last mentioned date the church has been supplied by Reverends G. F. Humphrey (1876), Allen Hazen (1877-78), and for briefer periods by other clergymen, and occasionally by professors from Dartmouth College.

Reverend N. R. Nichols was acting pastor and pastor of the church from February, 1880, until his dismissal in 1904. During his ministry 195 persons united with the church.



The meeting house was first located on the east side of Main Street (opposite the present residence of Samuel A. Armstrong), and fronting thereon. There it remained until 1852, when it was moved to its present location.

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“In the winter of 1817, Joseph Emerson and others on the Plain were very active in getting subscriptions for a new meeting-house and in getting out timber with which to build it.

“The subscriptions were obtained on condition that the house be built north of Mr. John Emerson’s. In the meantime those in favor of building on the old spot had appointed a Committee who were endeavoring to contract with some one for an amount of brick sufficient to build a meeting-house.

“Some of the Committee on the Plain beginning to be afraid of involving themselves too deeply, proposed selling out the frame then ready to raise. The bargain was soon closed at the price of £1,000,—the Plain Committee making a verbal agreement to come forward and buy pews and not to build another house.”—Church Records, Vol. 2, p. 130.

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The Congregational Church of Norwich is among the oldest of the Congregational churches of Vermont, only four others having preceded it in the date of their organization, viz.: those of Bennington, Newbury, Westminster, and Windsor. It was the earliest and for many years the only ecclesiastical organization in town. Some of the first settlers had been members of this church in Connecticut before settling here. These would naturally associate themselves for public worship, and as early as June, 1770, by the aid, it is said, of Reverend Peter Powers, the pioneer minister of Newbury, the nucleus of a church was gathered, consisting at the beginning of about a dozen members. Joseph Smalley and John Burnap were the first deacons. August 31, 1775, Reverend Lyman Potter, a native of Plymouth, Conn., and a graduate of Yale College in 1772, was installed over the church, at that time consisting of thirty-six persons. Before the settlement of Mr. Potter, the Norwich people had attended religious services at North Hanover and at the College. Women and children walked from three to six miles to attend these meetings. Mr. Potter was





CONGREGATIONAL CHURCH, NORWICH VILLAGE  
(ERECTED IN 1817)

ordained in the open woods, upon the site of the old cemetery on the hill, near the place where the first meeting house was built some years later.

Up to the year 1784, meetings were held at private houses, barns, or in the open air, according to the season or as seemed most convenient. A large barn erected by Colonel Peter Olcott was much used for this purpose. In the year mentioned the meeting house was so near complete as to be used for meetings. The ministry of Mr. Potter continued twenty-six years, until his dismissal in 1801. Two revivals of religion are mentioned as occurring during his pastorate, the first soon after his settlement when about forty persons were added to the church, and the second in the years 1780-81, when an extensive revival prevailed at Dartmouth College and in all the towns of the region. At the time of his dismissal the total membership was about one hundred. Only a few fragments of the church records during Mr. Potter's ministry have been preserved. These with the somewhat fuller records of his successors in the old North Church have recently been deposited in the office of the town clerk.

After the dismissal of Mr. Potter in 1801 the church was without a settled minister for about three years, during which time preaching was supplied chiefly by Professor Shurtleff, then a tutor in Dartmouth College and by Reverend Mr. Waters. Sept. 4, 1804, Reverend James W. Woodward was installed over the church and continued to act as pastor until June 8, 1821. During the period of Mr. Woodward's service many of the original and early members of the church were removed by death, and there was a large emigration from town to northern Vermont, to New York state and the farther West, especially from among the young people. There were several seasons of unusual interest but no general revival of religion while Mr. Woodward was pastor. In 1808, nineteen were added to the church and in 1817, fourteen; and about fifty were admitted by profession during his ministry. The benevolent disposition and scholarly graces of Mr. Woodward made him universally respected and beloved. A man of singular purity of character and life, his name still lingers among the older inhabitants of the town—a tender and fragrant memory.

Towards the close of Mr. Woodward's ministry an unfortunate controversy arose respecting the location of a new meeting house,

which resulted after a heated contest and considerable bitterness of feeling in the building of two church edifices, one near the site of the first meeting house, and the other at Norwich Plain, then beginning to put on the appearance of a rising country village and to aspire to become the business center of the town. The new meeting houses were each completed for occupation in the latter part of the year 1817, the one at the Plain being dedicated Nov. 20th, and the other Jan. 1, 1818. On both occasions the dedicatory sermon was preached by Mr. Woodward. The division of the congregation soon led, however, to the formation of a new church, known as the South Congregational Church of Norwich, which was organized June 19, 1819, with eleven members. Soon after, about twenty more were dismissed from the North Church (as the original church was thenceforward called) to join the church at the Plain, and further accessions in the years closely following raised the new organization and allied society to very respectable numerical and working strength. Still, for nearly a score of years later the North Church appears to have held the precedence in numbers and in the support of the old families of the town. Mr. Woodward was dismissed from this church June 8, 1821, having been settled nearly seventeen years. The membership was then about the same as at the time of his settlement, one hundred.

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Prior to the year 1800, Methodism had scarcely gained a foothold in Vermont. The first Methodist society in the State is said to have been formed at Vershire by Nicholas Sucthen in 1796. Two years later, only one hundred church members were returned as residents in the Vershire Circuit, then including the whole of eastern Vermont. Zadock Thompson, in the first edition of his Gazetteer of Vermont, published in 1824, gives the number of preachers, traveling and local, at that time as about one hundred, and the number of societies much greater. Probably no religious body ever made so rapid a growth in the state or the country as did the Methodists during the first twenty-five years of the nineteenth century. Although largely outnumbering every other at the present time, its later rate of increase is comparatively slow.

We have no information that fixes the time at which Methodist meetings began to be held in Norwich. The earliest preaching was







METHODIST MEETING-HOUSE, BEAVER MEADOW  
(BUILT IN 1837)

by circuit preachers, and of these Eleazer Wells and Nathaniel Stearns were among the first. Both of these men had the certificates of their ordination to the ministry (as early as 1810 or 1811) by Bishop McKendree entered upon the town records, and both doubtless labored here more or less about that time. Rev. Amasa Taylor was also here some part of the time about 1813. About 1815, the first church building was erected by the Methodists—a wooden structure of modest dimensions, which stood near the forks of the highway leading from Union Village to Norwich Plain, and about two miles south of the former place. Some members of the Waterman family were among the earliest adherents to the Methodists in the north part of the town. The Johnson family also was early represented. The first church building continued in use about twenty years. In 1836, the present brick church at Union Village was built, and the old church taken down and converted into a parsonage at that place. Here Methodist meetings have been regularly supported for nearly ninety years. The organization is styled the "Methodist Episcopal Society of Norwich and Thetford." The number of families at present worshipping with the society is about 150 from Norwich and Thetford; the number of scholars in Sabbath school, ninety. Morrill J. Walker was secretary and treasurer of the society from 1840 to December 28, 1879, when A. V. Turner was elected secretary, and still holds that office. E. M. Fullington is treasurer.

Either the same year or the year after the building of the brick church at Union Village (in 1836 or '37), a small church building was completed at West Norwich (Beaver Meadow), the better to accommodate the southern and western parts of the town, with adjacent portions of Sharon and Hartford. Full congregations were gathered here for many years; but deaths and removals, together with a constant decline in population, have greatly weakened the society in recent years. Stated meetings were, however, continued a portion of the time until 1884. Calvin Sawyer, Esq., a leading member of this society, died in 1883, at the advanced age of eighty-five years.

Although the strength of the Methodists has always been in the northern and western portions of the town, several prominent clergymen of the order resided at the Plain between 1820 and 1840. About 1833–35, Rev. Amasa Buck, and an associate, Moses Lewis, supported

a school at Norwich Plain, which they called Franklin Academy. Rev. Zerah Colburn, the great mathematical prodigy in early life, resided here for five or six years previous to his death, which occurred in 1840.

No assignment of resident preachers was made to this town previous to 1822. From that date, we have compiled out of the records of the Conference, and by the assistance of Rev. C. H. Walters of Union Village, a complete list, it is believed, of the Methodist clergymen who have since preached for any considerable time, either at Norwich and West Norwich, or (since 1840) at Union Village, as follows:

### AT NORWICH AND WEST NORWICH

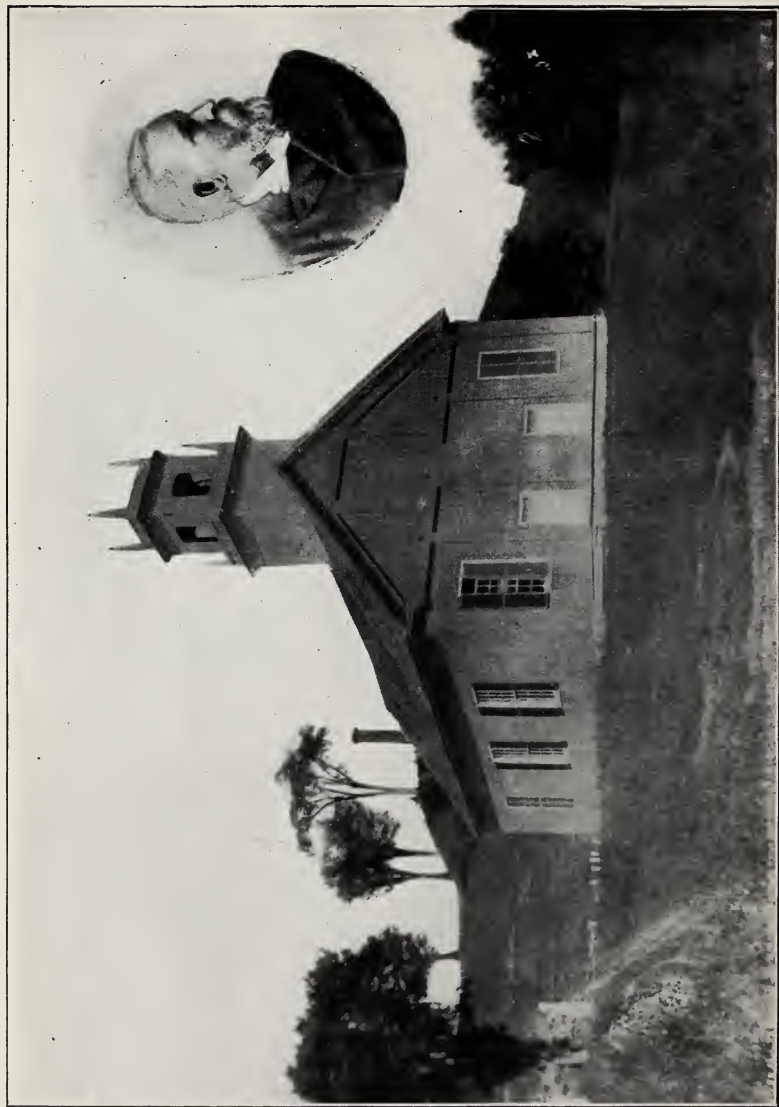
- |   |                                  |
|---|----------------------------------|
| 1822—Eleazer Wells                                  | 1847—Perez Mason, J. House       |
| 1823-25—Joseph B. White                             | 1848—J. House                    |
| 1826—Elijah Spear                                   | 1849—Albert Carter               |
| 1827—Caleb Dustin, Zerah Colburn,<br>Elijah Spear   | 1850—Norman Webster              |
| 1828—Caleb Dustin, C. W. Levings                    | 1851-52—Frederick T. Dailey      |
| 1829—Russell H. Spaulding                           | 1853-54—Erastus Pettingill       |
| 1830—J. Cumming, C. Granger                         | 1855—John LeSeur                 |
| 1831—Henry J. Wooley, James<br>Campbell, Aurin Gale | 1856—Pliny N. Granger            |
| 1832—Washington Wilcox, C. Lys-<br>comb             | 1857-58—Othniel R. Edwards       |
| 1833—Moses Lewis, Z. Colburn,<br>W. J. Kidder       | 1859—Mulford Bullard             |
| 1834—Moses Lewis, Newell Culver                     | 1860-61—N. B. Spaulding          |
| 1835-6—Samuel Richardson                            | 1862-63—John S. Little           |
| 1837—David Wilcox, Elisha Adams                     | 1864-65—M. R. Chase              |
| 1838—Richard Bedford, —Camp-<br>bell                | 1866—Dennis Wells                |
| 1840—Newell Culver, Jonas Scott                     | 1867—M. D. Herrick               |
| 1841—Newell Culver, Lyman Wing                      | 1868-69—C. S. Buswell            |
| 1842—A. T. Bullard, H. P. Cushing                   | 1870—D. H. Bicknell              |
| 1843-44—Henry J. Wooley                             | 1871—J. S. Little                |
| 1845—James Smith                                    | 1872-73—F. T. Lovett             |
| 1846—Perez Mason, C. D. Ingraham                    | 1874-76—Joseph Enwright          |
|   | 1877—L. Dodd                     |
|   | 1878—David Kilburn               |
|   | 1880—C. M. Brown, C. P. Flanders |
|   | 1882-83—C. H. Walters            |

### AT UNION VILLAGE

- |                   |                       |
|-------------------|-----------------------|
| 1841—Ira Beard    | 1868-69—C. S. Buswell |
| 1842—William Peck | 1870—D. H. Bicknell   |
| 1843—Abel Heath   | 1871—J. S. Little     |







METHODIST CHURCH AT UNION VILLAGE, REV. EMANUEL C. CHARLTON  
[ERECTED IN 1836]

1844-45—H. Gurnsey	1872-73—F. T. Lovett
1846—P. Mason, C. D. Ingraham	1874-76—J. Enright
1847—P. Mason	1877-79—L. Dodd
1848—J. L. Smith	1880-81—C. P. Flanders
1849—P. Merrill	1882-84—C. H. Walters
1850-51—S. G. Kellogg	1885-87—W. A. Bryant
1852-53—D. Wells	1888—G. T. Hedges
1854—R. H. Spaulding	1889-92—H. F. Forrest
1844—A. L. Pratt	1893—J. Narramore
1856—E. Pettingill	1894-95—H. A. Evans
1857—E. Dickerman	1896-97—J. E. Badger
1858-59—J. LeSeur	1898—T. Robinson
1860-61—W. B. Howard	1898—G. Lawton
1862-63—J. Enright	1900-1—H. N. Roberts
1864-66—E. Pettingill	1902—J. L. Beeman
1867—H. G. Day	1903-5—E. C. Charlton

In Norwich, as elsewhere, the Baptists were the first of the dissenting sects to contest the ground with the dominant New England orthodoxy. Soon after the settlement of the town we find mention made of Baptists here, and it is probable that a few of the very earliest settlers were of that faith.

The following documents are transcribed from the town records:

“WILLINGTON [CT.] October ye 6, 1780.

“This may Certify all Persons whom it may Concern that Calvin Johnsen of Willington is of the Babtist Perswation and is one of the society of the Babtist Church in said Willington and is ready to help to support the gospel in that order.

“ANDREW MAIN, Clerk.”

“WILLINGTON, September 24, 1784.

“This may certify that James Johnsen belonged to the Babtist society and his father and mother are Babtist.

“Signed in behalf of the Church,

“ANDREW MAIN, Church Clerk”

The above certificates were doubtless procured and lodged in the town clerk's office by the persons whose names they bear, with a view to exempt themselves from taxation for the support of the Rev. Mr. Potter, the settled minister of “the standing order” in the town at that time, as well as to relieve them from expenses for the building of the first meeting-house then in progress. A law of the state early

made taxation for these purposes compulsory on all taxpayers who did not thus prove their connection with some other church organization differing in religious sentiments from the majority of the town. This law, called the "ministerial act," continued in force till the year 1801, when it received important modifications in the direction of liberality to dissenters, who were then a numerous body in town. It was finally repealed in 1807, since which time all religious organizations in Vermont have depended wholly upon voluntary contributions for their support.

As early as 1799 the town records show the existence of an organized society of Baptists in Norwich. Asahel Lewis was at that time clerk of the society, and his certificate is on record showing the following members: Israel Brown, Elias Partridge, Jesse Geer, Jude Allen, John Lewis, Baxter Newton, Eli White, William Winslow, Nicholas Allen, William Wade, Amos Phillips, Martin Brown, Elisha White. Although this list is probably far from complete, the society was never very numerous in town, nor does it appear ever to have had a meeting house or a settled minister.

A Baptist society had been formed in the north part of Sharon and adjacent parts of Strafford as early as 1792, by the efforts of Rev. John Hibbard, a pioneer Baptist missionary, who, it is probable, may have divided his time to some extent with the small flock in Norwich. From causes unknown to the writer, the Norwich society seems to have dissolved early in the century, and the members, in many instances, attached themselves to the Methodists, after the formation of a Methodist church here.

The Sharon Baptist church above mentioned appears to have possessed a stronger vitality. Under the ministrations of Rev. James Parker (a deacon of the church, who in 1805 had been ordained as pastor, and was thenceforward actively engaged as a Baptist preacher until the close of a long and busy life in 1839) the church held its own in a sort of nomadic existence, worshipping in schoolhouses and private dwellings for forty years, until in 1833 it built a small but tasteful meeting house at West Norwich (Beaver Meadow), near which locality a considerable portion of its communicants then resided. After the death of Mr. Parker, the Rev. J. S. Herriek supplied the church about a year, and was formally ordained over the church and society





EPISCOPAL CHURCH, NORWICH VILLAGE  
ERECTED 1852



in 1840. Stated meetings continued to be held from this time onward for thirty years, during which period several ministers were settled and dismissed. In 1871, the church and society having become much weakened from deaths and removals, meetings were discontinued at Beaver Meadow, and the following year the society permanently removed to Sharon village, where it erected its second meeting house and where it still worships. The disused church building at West Norwich was, in 1875, taken down and the materials used in the construction of a parsonage at Sharon. During the thirty years' existence of the church at Beaver Meadow, about 125 persons were added to its membership. A list of Baptist ministers at Beaver Meadow, with their terms of service as far as we have been able to ascertain them, is as follows: Rev. James Parker, previous to 1839; Rev. J. S. Herrick, 1839-1842; Rev. J. Crowley, 1842-1846; Rev. Philip Chamberlin, 1846-1860; Rev. A. W. Boardman, 1862-; Rev. W. L. Coburn, 1864-1865; Rev. C. D. Fuller, 1868-1869.

A small Episcopal church was organized at Norwich as early as 1835, chiefly through the exertions of Doctor Ira Davis. Between 1846 and 1850, services were held occasionally in different parts of the town, conducted by Professor Hill of Dartmouth College, and others. In 1851 Doctor Edward Bourne, an Episcopal clergyman, became president of Norwich University, and from that time regular services were held in the village until the removal of the University to Northfield in 1866,—first in the chapel of the University, and after 1863 in a small church building erected that year just south of the parade ground of the University. This edifice was provided largely by the efforts of Mrs. Charlotte Rogers, daughter of Colonel William Barron, and from contributions obtained by her abroad. \*Since the removal of the University, Episcopal services have been held but occasionally in Norwich, the completion of an elegant and commodious church edifice at Hanover in 1874, within one mile of the village, rendering it easy for the small society still existing here to attend worship there.

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\*For several years services have been held regularly up to the present time—1905.

## CHAPTER IX

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### NORWICH IN THE REVOLUTIONARY WAR

The sources of information in regard to the part taken by the town in the Revolutionary struggle are few and scanty. The earliest allusion in the town records to this important epoch of the country's history, is found in the election of a Committee of Safety at the annual town meeting, March 11, 1777. This committee was five in number: Deacon Joseph Smalley, Samuel Hutchinson, John Hatch, Captain Hezekiah Johnson and John Hopson. There is much reason to believe, however, that this was not the first Committee of Safety that acted for the town; but was a new committee selected to conform to a recommendation made to the towns in Cumberland and Gloucester Counties by the Convention at Westminster which declared the independence of Vermont the preceding January.\* It is pretty certain that a company of militia was organized in Norwich as early as the year 1774 or 1775. Of this company Peter Olecott was chosen Captain and Thomas Murdock, Ensign, doubtless by the votes of the men enrolled in the same. The company was probably a purely voluntary organization of patriotic young men, in Colonel Seth Warner's regiment of Rangers in 1775, in the continental service. Colonel Timothy Bedell, of Haverhill, N. H., also raised a regiment the same year for service in Canada. Fresh regiments were enlisted early in the spring of 1776, by both Colonel Bedell and Colonel Warner. Again on the 7th of March Colonel Morey writes to the New Hampshire Committee of Safety: "Some recruiting officers from Colonel Warner's party [regiment] have enlisted a considerable number of fine men—they had the money to pay bounties" (forty shillings to each man). Probably Norwich contributed more or less to fill the ranks of each of the above named military bodies, though their names and number cannot now be ascertained. At this time and during most of the Revolutionary

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\*Governor and Council, Vol. I, p. 47.

War, the New Hampshire Grants seem to have been a general recruiting ground for officers from the New England states in quest of soldiers. As no organized state government existed at that time on the territory west of the river, the town received no credit for these scattering enlistments and no local records remain to show their number or term of service.

The first alarm from an apprehended attack upon the inhabitants of the upper Connecticut followed immediately the hasty and disastrous retreat of the American army from Canada in the early summer of 1776, leaving the northern frontiers exposed to the inroads of the British and their Indian allies. Naturally, quite a panic ensued, and many of the settlements most exposed were partially abandoned. But there was immediate organization for mutual defense through the Committees of Safety of the several towns on both sides of the river.—To show the prompt and businesslike way in which the Revolutionary fathers met the crisis, we transcribe the proceedings of a meeting held at Hanover, July 5th, 1776:

“At a meeting of several adjacent towns, viz.: Lyme, Hanover, Lebanon, Thetford, Norwich, and Hartford, at the College Hall, on Friday the fifth day of July, 1776—

“Chose Amos Robinson [of Hartford] Clerk.

“Chose Dea. Nehemiah Estabrook, [Lebanon], Moderator.

“*Voted*, To raise fifty men exclusive of officers to repair to Royalton, to fortify that Town and scout from thence to Onion River and Newbury.

“*Voted*, To appoint one Captain and two Subalterns.

“*Voted*, To appoint Mr. David Woodward [of Hanover] Capt.

“*Voted*, To appoint Mr. Joshua Hazen [of Hartford] 1<sup>st</sup> Lieut.

“*Voted*, To appoint Mr. Abel Lyman 2<sup>nd</sup> Lieut.

“*Voted*, To appoint a Committee of three men to direct the building of the Fort at Royalton, and furnish s<sup>d</sup> fort with all necessary supplies.

“Chose Esq. Joel Marsh (Hartford), Mr. Isaac Morgan, (Sharon) and Maj. John Slapp (Lebanon) to be s<sup>d</sup> Committee.

“*Voted*, to raise 250 men exclusive of officers to go to Newbury to fortify, scout and guard there for three months unless sooner discharged.

“Voted, To appoint Capt. Abner Seeley [of Thetford] Maj<sup>r</sup> of the last mentioned Department.

“Voted, To divide s<sup>d</sup> 250 into four Companies.

“Voted, To appoint Mr. Levi Willard,\* Mr. Oliver Ashley and Mr. Samuel Paine [Lyne] to be Captains.

“Voted, That the Captains appoint their Subalterns.

“Voted, To appoint a Committee of three men to direct and order the affairs of the Newbury Department.

“Voted, That Col. [Jacob] Bayley, Col. [Chas.] Johnson and Col. [Peter] Olcott be s<sup>d</sup> Committee.

“Voted, That this Committee engage that the officers and soldiers in both the afore mentioned Departments be honorably paid for their services.

“Voted, To dismiss<sup>o</sup> this meeting—it is accordingly dismissed.—

“AMOS ROBINSON, Clerk.”

We give an intercepted letter from a prominent tory in Thetford to Benjamin Brooks of Claremont, showing the views and expectations of the Loyalists in the upper valley of the Connecticut at the time of Burgoyne's invasion :

“THETFORD, June 17, 1777.

“SIR—I would inform you that I have just received Intelligence from Canada, and they are a making all preparations to come down, and I would have you all stand in readiness to help; your arms are all ready for you and will be sent to some secure Place, so that you may have them, and I will let you know where in a few days you may expect to receive them. I would have you encourage all friends for Government not to give back, and let everything be kept as a profound secret, for our Lives depend upon it;—for if the plan should be discovered, we are gone, and if there are any more that have sworn allegiance to the King since I talked with you, I should be glad to know it, for I must make a return how many men we can raise. I hear that Captain Sumner, [Benjamin of Claremont] is laid under Bonds since I saw you there; I hope he won't be discouraged, and if he made any Progress I should be glad to know it. I hope in six weeks we shall be able to clear all our friends from Bonds and Imprisonment;—For God's sake let everything be carried on with secrecy, and I doubt not thro' the justness of our cause we shall overcome the Dammed Rebels.

“So I remain a true friend to Government.

“To Captain Benjamin Brooks.”

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\*Levi Willard was a graduate of Dartmouth College of that year (1776), in the same class with Abel Curtis of Norwich, and undoubtedly the same person to whom Mr. Curtis addressed the letter quoted in *Governor and Council*, Vol. VIII, pp. 298-300, shortly after said Willard had deserted to the enemy in the summer of 1777. The letter is curious and well worth reading. Levi Willard served with the British army in Canada, returned to Vermont some time after the close of the Revolutionary War, and died in obscurity and disgrace at Sheldon, Vt., in 1839, in the eightieth year of his age.



This letter is copied from "New Hampshire State Papers, Vol. VIII, p. 589." No signature is appended to the same, and it is probable that from prudential reasons none was affixed by the writer. The disquieting effect upon the patriots of the discovery of such persons in their midst, can easily be imagined; and if their identity was shown, it is probable they were *waited upon* by the local Committee of Safety without much delay. There is considerable reason to believe, however, that the above letter was written by Thomas Sumner, Esq., of Thetford.

From "Vermont State Papers" we learn that the "General Assembly of the Freemen of Vermont," at a session of that body held previous to April 30, 1778, ordered the confiscation of the estates of "the enemies of this State and the United States living within this State, who have distinguished themselves by repairing to the enemy, or other treasonable conduct," etc. The same Act provided for one or more Courts of Confiscation to carry into effect the provisions of that order. As a result of this enactment the following order by a Court of Confiscation sitting at Norwich, was issued:

"NORWICH, May, 1775.

"By the Governor and Council of the State of Vermont.

"The Court appointed to confiscate and make sale of the estates of such as are gone, and have been to the enemy, having attended to that business, and advised all persons to appear and show cause, if any they had, why the estates hereafter named, should not be confiscated to the use of this State;—and whereas no reasons do appear, and on the contrary, evidences appearing which clearly set forth their criminality:—

"Therefore,

"In consequence of the depositions, and by our knowledge of many circumstances concurring therewith, whereby it appears to this Court that the estates of ———— ought to be, and they hereby are confiscated to the use of this State; and we do accordingly appoint, and authorize Ensign Hosford and Samuel Smith, commissioners to make sale of said estates (except so much as is hereinafter excepted) and audit the accounts which may be brought against the several estates, under the direction of the Judge of Probate of the district in which said estates lie, who is hereby directed to make return, both of



the money received and the accounts exhibited, to the Council of said State, under oath of office, and to administer the oath of office to the said commissioners; and either of said commissioners are hereby empowered to administer oaths to any person who shall offer said accounts for settlement; and also to give deeds in behalf of this State, to the purchasers of said forfeited estates.

“The estates to be excepted, are, first, the hundred acre lot on which ———— now lives; and, secondly, the hundred acre lot now in the possession of the wife of ———— .

“And the judge of probate, together with the said commissioners, are hereby authorized to grant relief to any person or persons, suffering on account of the above forfeitures, as they, in their wisdom, shall see fit.

“By order of Court,

“PAUL SPOONER, Clerk.”

By courtesy of the late Honorable Hiram A. Huse, former State Librarian of Vermont, we are in possession of a copy of Account Current between Abel [Ensign] Hosford and Samuel Smith (the commissioners appointed by the foregoing order of the Court), and the state of Vermont. The persons named in the account were, with one exception, residents of Thetford, and that one not of Norwich. It is an interesting document, though not connected with the early history of town save from the fact that it was the outcome of an order of a Court of Confiscation in session in Norwich. We will give it a place in the latter part of this volume.

The following is a copy of an order for draft of the militia:

“NORWICH, 22<sup>nd</sup> Sept., 1777

“SIR.

“Pursuant to your orders of 21<sup>st</sup> Inst., I have called the Militia of this town together and drafted a part of the same, to march without loss of time as they shall be directed. . . . Their names as follow :

“John Slaughter, Adj<sup>t</sup>, John Wright, Sarg<sup>t</sup>, Israel Brown, Joseph Bartlett, Samuel Wright, John Reccord, Seth Johnson, Elisha Baxter, Elisha Waterman, Joseph Ball, Samuel Partridge, Elias Partridge, Dole Johnson, Samuel Curtiss, Asahel Moredock, John Hopson, Elijah Baldwin, Elisha Brown, Gersham Bartlett, Jur, Samuel Brown, Jur.

“Certified by Solomon Cushman, Lieut.

“To Colo Peter Olcott.”

## ROSTER OF THE REVOLUTIONARY SOLDIERS AT NORWICH

## I COMMISSIONED OFFICERS

Peter Olcott, Colonel; Thomas Murdock, Major; Lyman Potter, Chaplain; John Slafter, Adjutant; Joseph Lewis, Surgeon's Mate in Gen. Arnold's Expedition against Quebec; Elisha Burton, Captain; Timothy Bush, Captain; Nathl Boardman, Captain; Paul Brigham, Cont. Service, 1777-1781, Conn. line; Solomon Cushman, Cont. Service Col. Bedel's Regt.; Elijah Gates, Captain; Nathaniel Seaver, Captain; Joseph Hatch, Cont. Service, commissioned by New York; Abel Curtis, Captain; Benjamin Burton, Lieutenant; John Hopson, Lieutenant; Roswell Morgan, Lieutenant; Elisha Partridge, Lieutenant; James Smalley, Lieutenant, Cont. Army, Warner's Regt.

## II ENLISTED MEN

Amos Ames, Private; Parke Avery, Private, (Pensioned in 1808); Elijah Baldwin, Private; Jonathan Ball, Private; Joseph Ball, Private; Gershom Bartlett, Jr., Private, (2 enlistments); Jonathan Bartlett, Private; Joseph Bartlett, Private; Elihu Baxter, Private; Cyrus Brewster, Private; Ebenezer Broughton, Private; Elisha Brown, Private (2); Israel Brown, Private; Samuel Brown, Jr., Private; Elijah Brownson, Private; Daniel Buck, Private, lost an arm at Bennington, 1777; Elijah Burnap, Private; Jacob Burnap, Private, died in the army of Gen. Gates, Sept. 23, 1777; John Burnap, Jr., Private; Jacob Burt, (Pensioner), came in after the war; Josiah Burton, Private, in Cont. Army, 3 enlistments, wounded at Saratoga, 1777; Henry Burton, Private, served in Conn.; Nathl Burwash, Private; John Bush; Sylvanus Chadwick, Private; Samuel Coit, Private, in Conn. Militia; James Crary, Private; John Crary, Private; William Crary, Private; Samuel Curtis, Private; Joseph Cushman, Private, Cont. Army, 4 y ars, 2nd Conn. Regt.; Moses Davis, served in Cont. Army; Prince Freeman, Private; Cornelius Gilbert, Private; Cornelius Gilbert, Private; Eleazar Goodrich, Private; Hezekiah Goodrich, Private; John Goodrich, Private; Josiah Goodrich, Jr., Private; Adrian Hatch, Private; Benjamin Hatch, Private; William Hovey, Private; Jerome Hutchinson, Private; John Hutchinson, Private, served in Cont. Army, died at Philadelphia, 1778; Abner Hubbard, Capt. in Conn. Troops; Ebenezer Jaquith, Private; Dole Johnson, Private; James Johnson, Private, Cont. Army, 4 years, Conn. Troops; Calvin Johnson, Private, Cont. Army, Conn. Troops; Hezekiah Johnson, Jr., Private; Seth Johnson, Private; Joseph Loveland, Private; Nathaniel Messenger, Private; Gershom Morse, Private; Gershom Morse, Jr., Private; Job Morse, Private; Asabel Murdock, Private; Israel Newton, Private; Daniel Nye, Private; Elias Partridge, Private; Ephraim Partridge, Private, died a prisoner in Canada; Samuel Partridge, Jr., Private; Jeremiah Percival, Sergt.; Samuel Poole, (Pensioner), came to Norwich after the war; John Reccord, Private; John Sargent, Jr., wounded, prisoner in Canada, 1781-2; Conant B. Sawyer, Private, in Cont. Army, Conn. Regt.; Calvin Seaver, Private; Jonathan Spear, Private, in Cont. Army, died in N.J.; Joshua Spear, Sergt.; Aaron Stimson, Sergt.; Joel Stimson, Sergt., (Fifer);

Peter Thatcher, Jr., Private; Samuel Thatcher, Private; Lyman Tolman, Private; Elijah Tracy, Private; Joseph Tucker, Private; Joseph Vinsen, Private; Eli Washburn, Sen., Private; Daniel Waterman, Jr., Private; Elisha Waterman, Private; Elijah Waterman, Private; Levi Waterman, Private; Samuel Waterman, Private; Eli White, Sergt.; Joel White, Private; Solomon White, Private; Jonathan Whiting, Private; Caleb West, Private; Timothy Wilmot, in Conn. Troops; James Wilson, Private, wagon master; John Wright, Private; Samuel Wright, Sergt.

The deaths of fifty-four (all that are known) of the above Revolutionary soldiers, that occurred after the year 1800, show an average longevity of over eighty years. The last to die was Deacon Israel Newton, 1856, 93 years.

Samuel Coit, 1851, 89 years; James Crary, 1849, 86 years; Jerome Hutchinson, 1848, 86 years; Joseph Tucker, 1840, 89 years; Joseph Cushman, 1848, 89 years; Hezr Goodrich, 1848, 91 years; Benjamin Burton, 1847, 92 years; Daniel Nye, 1844, 84 years.

## CHAPTER X

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### NORWICH IN THE SECOND WAR WITH GREAT BRITAIN

In the spring of 1812, war with Great Britain again seemed imminent. Causes of complaint against the aggressions of the British government had existed for a long time, and the irritation was now increasing on all sides. It did not seem possible that actual war could much longer be postponed, although public opinion in the United States was still far from unanimous for an immediate appeal to arms.

Norwich, as had been her wont in Revolutionary times, again let her voice be heard when great public and national interests were being agitated before the people. At the close of a town meeting held June 18, 1812, a paper was presented to the meeting containing the preamble and resolutions which we copy below. On account of the great length of the preamble, we are obliged to abridge it considerably. The document was obviously drawn up with much care by some person familiar with the political history of the country. After some debate the clerk was directed to read the paper. A spirited discussion ensued, and the preamble and resolutions were finally adopted by a large majority, as true in their statement of facts and expressive of the sense of the town on the question at issue. It was voted that the same be put on record in the town clerk's office. A final clause appended to the fourth resolution denouncing in severe terms as enemies of their country that portion of the Federal party who were at that time most unsparing in their criticisms of the war policy of President Madison, and the measures of Congress then pending to procure redress, was rejected by a decisive vote.

#### PREAMBLE

"When we behold our country on the very verge of war, the true patriot cannot help passing in mind the whole catalogue of injuries

and wrongs that our country has experienced both from England and France."

Here follows a lengthy and spirited arraignment of England, beginning with the persecutions which drove the Pilgrim fathers across the sea in 1620, and enumerating a long series of abuses, exactions, and oppressions which the colonists had endured from British tyranny during the whole colonial period, and which resulted at last, in 1775, in revolt and successful revolutions.

The charges and complaints are set forth in rigorous language, and in their comprehensiveness remind the reader of the well-known recital so admirably formulated in the Declaration of Independence. We quote again from the record:

"Great Britain, after experiencing defeats and delays in subduing the colonies, in 1782 acknowledged them independent of the mother country and entered into a treaty with them as an independent nation possessed with every attribute of national sovereignty, and made a solemn engagement to regulate her conduct towards us consonant to these her professions. But stung with pride and governed by some evil magic spell she has not ceased to violate her plighted faith—impressing our seamen, notwithstanding the most earnest remonstrances of our government. She has not ceased to vex our lawful commerce in every sea; She has crimsoned the waters at the mouths of our rivers with the blood of our citizens; Her naval officers have insulted our Government and disregarded our municipal laws and regulations, even at the very threshold of our national sovereignty. She has excited the savages to make war upon our defenceless frontiers. \* \* \* \* In the midst of the most ostensible show of negotiation, she has sent her emissaries and spies into our most populous cities and towns to encourage our own citizens to resist the laws, promote civil war, and has offered her aid in dismembering the integrity and union of these states. And to fill up the black catalogue of wrongs, her public ministers sent to reside near our Gov<sup>t</sup> have in more instances than one endeavored to make our own citizens believe we have no neutral rights, and attempted to palliate the wrongs of their own government, magnifying complaints against our own, denying us justice, and with a hollow, false profession of friendship turned a deaf ear to all our reasonable and just complaints. \* \* \* France also in her turn



has not been behind in violating our national rights. She has unjustly plundered our merchants of many millions of their property, burnt many of our vessels on the high seas, and under the most frivolous pretences delays entering into any adjustment of our just and reasonable claims against that government for the wrongs we have received at her hands. And we do fully believe Congress would be justified in declaring war against both France and England."

#### RESOLUTIONS

"*Resolved*, that we have full confidence in the Chief Executive of the United States, and Heads of Departments, and in a majority of both Houses of Congress, and we fully believe that the measures which appear to be pursued by them are suitable and proper, and if adhered to with unanimity, will terminate to the honor and interest of the United States.

"*Resolved*, that we consider the Embargo not only wise and politic, but absolutely necessary to save and keep our property at home and call home what was abroad; and in case our government had been so forgetful as to have omitted so prudent a measure, our merchants would have had good reason to censure the neglect.

"*Resolved*, that we consider it the duty of every good citizen to support his own government in all its just demands upon a foreign Power; and we consider that our claim upon Great Britain to rescind her Orders in Council, to remunerate our merchants for the unjust spoliation upon their lawful commerce, for the restoration of our seamen, and the pretended right of search, are all just causes of complaint and war against that Power—and we do most solemnly pledge ourselves, our property, and our all, in support of our government in demanding justice of Great Britain.

"*Resolved*, that we regard many of our citizens who differ from us in politics as honest, good men who have the good of their country at heart, but for want of correct information err in judgment.

"To such we can cheerfully extend the hand of charity, and believe that when they are better informed they will walk with us in any measures to retrieve the honor and interest of the country."

It is a curious coincidence that on the very day that the foregoing Preamble and Resolutions were being discussed and voted on in the Norwich town meeting the Congress of the United States at Wash-

ington was voting a Declaration of War against Great Britain. Just six days later, news of that declaration having been received—on the 24th of June, the selectmen called another town meeting “to raise a tax for defraying town expenses and to increase the wages of the detachment from Norwich,” which tax was promptly voted on the 6th of July following. It was then voted to increase the monthly pay of the non-commissioned officers and privates who have been or may be detached during the present year \$3.00 per month, the town to be “holden to make up that sum in case the legislature should not give the same relief generally.”

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### NORWICH SOLDIERS IN THE WAR OF 1812

- \*Alden Partridge, Captain United States Engineers. Died at Norwich, January 17, 1854.
- \*William Partridge, Captain United States Engineers, Chief Engineer of Army under General Hull. Died at Detroit, Mich. Tery., while prisoner of war, September 20, 1812.
- \*Danl. A. A. Buck, Captain 31st United States Infantry. Died at Washington, D. C., December 25, 1841.
- \*Oliver G. Burton, Major 33d United States Infantry. Died in Cuba, 1820.
- \*John Wright, First Lieutenant United States Engineers. Died at Norwich, September 10, 1860.
- Ethan Burnap, Captain 31st United States Infantry. Died at Lowell, Mass., February 23, 1872.
- Calvin Burnap, Lieutenant 31st Infantry.

### ENLISTED MEN

- Levi Burton. Died at Plattsburgh. N. Y., Nov. 22, 1813.
- Lyman Baldwin. Died at Norwich, Vt.
- Harvey Burton. Died at Norwich, Vt., October 22, 1868.
- Elisha Hutchinson. Died at Norwich, Vt., March 28, 1872.
- David Morrill. Died at Norwich, Vt., 1878.
- Anderson Miner.
- Cyrus Partridge. Died at Norwich, Vt., July 16, 1842.
- Ebenezer Spear. Died at Norwich, Vt., July 30, 1870.
- Roswell Wright. Died at Norwich, Vt., October 9, 1866.
- Weston Sawyer. Emigrated to Ohio.
- Jedediah Spaulding. Died at Port Huron, Mich.
- Alex Percival. Died in service.
- Aaron Keyes. Died at Norwich, Vt.
- John Miles. Died at Norwich, Vt.

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\*Graduates of the United States Military Academy.

## NORWICH SOLDIERS IN WAR WITH MEXICO

T. B. Ransom, Colonel 9th United States Infantry. Killed at Chapultepec, September 13, 1847.

Henry O. Brigham, Drummer 9th United States Infantry. Died at Detroit, Mich.

James Crangle, Hudson Kimball, Oramell Chamberlain, Ezekiel V. Hatch, George Hatch, — Rowell, Elijah Hatch. Died at Tunbridge, Vt.

Frederick K. Spear. Died at West Point, N. Y.

## CHAPTER XI

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### NORWICH IN THE CIVIL WAR

During the four years of war for the suppression of the Rebellion, Norwich furnished 178 different men for the armies of the Union. There were seven re-enlistments, making the whole number of soldiers credited to the town 185. By the census of 1860, the number of inhabitants was 1759. It appears, therefore, that the town sent to the seat of war rather more than one in ten of its entire population, during the four years' continuance of hostilities. About the same proportion holds good for the state at large, Vermont contributing, out of an aggregate population of 315,116, soldiers to the number of 34,555 for the defense of the Union. Of the 178 men enlisting from Norwich, twenty-seven laid down their young lives in the service of the country. The soil of every southern state, from the Potomac to the Rio Grande, was moistened by the blood or supplied a grave to one or more of these. The town paid the larger part of these men liberal bounties, amounting to about \$32,000, in addition to their state and government pay. All calls for men upon the town by the national authorities were promptly and fully met.

The patriotic response of our people to the expenses and sacrifices of the war was, in general, hearty and emphatic; and yet candor and the truth of history compels us to confess that there were here, as in most other towns throughout the north, a few disloyal spirits who sympathized with the Slaveholders' rebellion, who denounced the war from beginning to end, and who scarcely concealed their satisfaction when news came of rebel victories and union defeats. The lapse of twenty-five years has stilled the passions of those eventful times, and charity impels us to spare these misguided men the obloquy and disgrace such as an earlier generation visited upon the Tories of the Revolution. It is the easier to do this, since on each recurring

Memorial Day we see some of those individuals who, in the dark days of the war, reproached the soldiers of the Union as "Lincoln's hirelings," and invoked for them "hospitable graves" in the south, now conspicuous in assisting to decorate the graves of those who fell, and in rendering honor to those veterans who still survive. Not to have given a helping hand when one's country was convulsed by a mighty struggle for existence, not to have contributed their mite in aid of the grand result in which the new birth of the nation was achieved—surely the memory of this were punishment enough for any who may have lived till now to witness (what we all behold) the spectacle of a great people, reunited, prosperous, and altogether free.

## NORWICH SOLDIERS IN THE CIVIL WAR, 1861-1865.

### VOLUNTEERS FOR THREE YEARS (109)

Names	Age	Reg.	Co.	Enlistment	Remarks
Adams, Calvin S.	43	9	A	Dec. 30, '63	Discharged Feb. 25, '64.
Andrews, John	42	17	I	June 10, '64	Deserted July 14, '64. Arrested and sentenced to three years at Ft. Delaware.
Austin, George E.	18	17	F	Apr. 12, '64	Pro. Corp., Sergt., 2nd Lt. Co. D, July 10, '65. Must. out as Sergt. July 14, '65.
Beedle, Elisha T.	18	17	D	Feb. 13, '64	Wounded. Pro. Cor., May 9, '65. Mustered out July 14, '65.
Bicknell, William	25	4	B	Sept. 2, '61	Mustered out Sept. 30, '64.
Bills, George	19	6	C	Oct. 19, '61	Died of disease in service, Dec. 2, '62.
Blood, Horace	25	Cav.	D	Nov. 8, '61	Discharged May 18, '62.
Blood, William H.	22	6	B	Aug. 14, '62	Mustered out June 19, '65.
Bowker, John	18	17	H	Apr. 16, '64	Deserted May 22, '64.
Buswell, Albert	42	8	D	Jan. 4, '64	Mustered out June 28, '65.
Carpenter, William E.	24	8	D	Jan. 4, '64	Absent sick June 28, '65. (Date of muster out of his Regt.)
Chamberlin, Franklin	25	7	H	Jan. 24, '62	Died at Pensacola, Fla., Dec. 27, '62.
Clapp, Alonzo D.	18	17	D	Oct. 7, '63	Corporal. Died in hospital Oct. 29, '64.
Clough, Burchard	27	9	A	Jan. 4, '64	Prisoner, Feb. 2, '64. Died at Andersonville, June 30, '64.
Colburn, William H.	24	3	C	June 1, '61	Killed in battle at Lewinsville, Va. Sept 12, '61.
Coon, Almon G.	23	17	D	Feb. 11, '64	Sergeant. Discharged Jan. 4, '65.
Coon, William H.	19	17	D	Feb. 11, '64	Corporal, Pro. Sergeant. Mustered out July 14, '65.
Corey, Wm. H. H.	20	6	B	Sept. 20, '61	Pro. Corp. Feb. 1, '62. Discharged Oct. 27, '62.



Names	Age	Reg.	Co.	Enlistment	Remarks
Crawford, Bradford M.	18	17	I	June 21, '64	Mustered out July 14, '65.
Currier, George	23	9	A	Dec. 26, '63	Died of disease at Ft. Monroe, Va., Nov. 4, '64.
Currier, Lewis	18	7	H	Feb. 26, '62	Died of disease at Carrollton, La., Nov. 10, '62.
Currier, Simeon	23	7	H	Feb. 14, '62	Discharged Oct. 15, '62.
Curtis, George A.	19	Cav.	E	Oct. 11, '61	Re-enlisted Dec. 28, '63. Deserted Oct. 19, '64, Cedar Creek.
Davis, Oscar F.	33	9	A	Dec. 26, '63	Prisoner Feb. 2, '64. Died at Andersonville Sept. 9, '64.
Doucett, Joseph	21	17	D	Feb. 17, '64	Deserted Mar. 9, '64.
Doyle, Erasmus	25	3	F	June 1, '61	Re-enlisted Dec. 21, '63. Died of wounds May 8, '64.
Dutton, Lewis H.	19	3	C	June 1, '61	Sergeant. Discharged Mar. 24, '63.
Eastman, Charles M.	15	11	D	Oct. 20, '63	Pro. Corp. Mustered out Aug. 25, '65.
Fowler, John G.		3	C	July 21, '61	Pro. Corp. Oct. 2, '61. Discharged Dec. 25, '62.
Gadbois, Joseph	30	7	F	Nov. 30, '61	Sergt. Re-en. Mar. 8, '64. Deserted while on Vet. furlough, Sept. 27, '64.
Gammell, William T.	19	17	D	Feb. 19, '64	Mustered out of service July 14, '65.
Gee, Freeman	21	17	I	June 23, '64	Missed in action, Sept. 30, '64. Discharged Aug. 3, '65.
Gee, George W.	18	17	I	July 4, '64	Missed in action Sept. 30, '64. Mustered out July 14, '65.
Gibbs, Myron D.	19	6	B	Aug. 16, '62	Mustered out June 19, '65.
Goddard, Charles A.	21	6	B	Sept. 18, '61	Pro. Corp., Sergt. Mustered out Oct. 28, '64.
Goff, Marshall C.	19	17	D	Aug. 26, '63	Prisoner. Died at Salisbury, N. C., Feb. 11, '65.
Goodrich, James B.	25	11	H	Aug. 7, '62	Prisoner June 23, '64 (Welden R. R.) Died in rebel prison.
Goodrich, Leonard H.	28	6	B	Aug. 14, '62	Discharged Mar. 17, '64. Lost a leg in service.
Hall, Daniel	24	6	B	Feb. 24, '62	Re-enlisted Mar. 27, '64. Mustered out June 26, '65.
Hall, George W.	23	3	F	June 1, '61	Discharged Feb. 26, '63.
Hartwell, Charles W.	20	17	I	June 8, '64	Died Nov. 3, '64.
Hatch, Henry H.	22	3	C	June 1, '61	Corporal. Discharged July 24, '62.
Hebard, Abel C.	24	9	A	Dec. 26, '63	Pro. Corp. June 5, '65. Mustered out Dec. 1, '65.
Hebard, George B.	22	9	A	Dec. 24, '63	Discharge for disability soon after muster in.
Hebard, James C.	19	6	B	Sept. 2, '61	Discharged Oct. 29, '62.
Hernesy, Peter	34	9	F	Dec. 21, '63	Mustered out of service Dec. 1, '65.
Hilton, Joseph L.	22	6	B	Sept. 6, '61	Pro. Corp. Mustered out Oct. 28, '64.
Hinds, Justin G.	21	Cav.	D	July 29, '64	Died in Libby Prison, Nov. 16, '64.
Holt, Charles	30	9	I	Dec. 21, '63	Mustered out of service Dec. 1, '65.
Holland, Reuben W.	27	5	H	Aug. 28, '61	Re-en. Dec. 15, '63. Wounded May 5, '64. Mustered out June 29, '65.
Hopson, Allen H.	17	4	B	Aug. 7, '61	Died Dec. 24, '62, of wounds received at Fredericksburg, Dec. 13, '62.
Hopson, William H.	21	3	C	June 1, '61	Discharged Nov. 5, '62. Re-en. Feb. 24, '64, in Co. F., 17 Regt. Pro. Corp. Apr. 24, '64. Killed in battle of Poplar Grove Church, Va., Sept. 30, '64.
Howard, Seaver	36	17	H	Sept. 24, '63	Sergt. Transferred to Vet. Res. Corps Apr., '65. Mustered out July 30, '65.

Name	Age	Reg. Co.	Enlistment	Remarks
Hutchinson, Alonzo B.	23	6 B		Com. Capt. Co. B. 6th Regt. Oct. 5, '61, Honorably discharged July 23, '63, for wounds received at Bank's Ford, Va., May 4, '63.
Johnson, Augustus H.	20	6 B	Sept. 23, '61	Died of disease at Washington, Oct. 20, '62.
Kimball, Alphah	23	7 H	Jan. 23, '62	Re-enlisted Feb. 15, '64. Mustered out Mar. 14, '66.
Kimball, Benj. F.	44	17 D	Feb. 26, '64	Trans. to Vet. Res. Corps. Mustered out July 20, '65.
Kimball, Daniel	31	9 A	Dec. 29, '63	Mustered out of service Oct. 19, '65.
Kimball, Henry H.	19	6 B	Sept. 17, '61	Pro. Corp. Discharged Oct. 4, '62.
Kimball, Wm. A.	18	3 F	Sept. 17, '61	Discharged Dec. 25, '62. Died at Norwich, Jan. 14, '63.
Knapp, Chas. A.	18	6 B	Sept. 5, '61	Died June 4, '64, of wounds received at Spottsylvania.
Knapp, Henry W.	21	4 K	Sept. 2, '61	Musician. Mustered out of service Sept. 30, '64.
Lamphere, George	21	6 B	Apr. 1, '62	Pro. Corporal, Sergt. Mustered out Apr. 16, '65.
Low, Willard	24	8	Dec. 28, '63	Mustered in Jan. 7, '64. Deserted.
Marcotte, Alexis	21	9	Dec. 21, '63	Mustered in Jan. 7, '64. Deserted. Died in Canada.
McDonald, Wm.	22	17 I	June 21, '64	Deserted July 7, '64.
McNorten, Seth	43	17 D	Feb. 18, '64	Mustered out May 25, '65.
Menoit, Clifford	21	9	Dec. 29, '63	Deserted. Never joined regiment.
Messenger, Albert H.	30	6 B	Aug. 16, '62	Mustered out of service June 19, '65.
Messenger, Chas. M.	22	6 B	Sept. 6, '61	Mustered out of service Oct. 28, '64.
Messenger, George	26	6 B	Sept. 7, '61	Corporal, Pro. Sergt. Mustered out Oct. 28, '64.
Morey, George W.	22	9 F	Dec. 25, '63	Mustered out Dec. 1, '65.
Morey, Robert R.	33	9 F	Dec. 19, '63	Mustered out Dec. 1, '65.
Neal, James K.	17	19 A	Aug. 18, '64	Died Mar. 29, '65, at Hampton, Va.
Noyes, Edwin M.	25	3 C	May 23, '61	2nd Lieut., Pro. 1st Lieut. Nov. 7, '61. Died Aug. 31, '62.
Nye, George W.	34	9 A	Dec. 26, '63	Mustered out Aug. 7, '65.
Parkhurst, Oscar M.	20	Cav. E	Sept. 28, '61	Re-enlisted Dec. 28, '63. Pro. Corp. Jan. 1, '64. Mustered out June 12, '65.
Pennock, Frederick	18	6 B	Mar. 10, '62	Killed by a shell before Petersburg June 27, '64.
Piper, Merrill J.	18	17 I	May 29, '64	Deserted July 7, '64.
Ray, Edwin R.	22	9 A	Dec. 26, '63	Died of disease Mar. 7, '64, at Newborn, N. C.
Reynolds, George W.	19	17 D	Feb. 18, '64	Mustered out July 11, '65.
Riley, Peter	34	9 E	Sept. 7, '64	Transferred to 11th Regt. Jan. 20, '65. Mustered out Aug. 25, '65.
Sargent, Charles A.	22	4 B	Aug. 22, '61	Wounded. Lost a leg in service. Discharged Aug. 25, '63.
Sargent, James M.	22	6 B	Aug. 18, '62	Mustered out June 19, '65.
Shadick, Isaac	18	17 H	Mar. 29, '64	Died of disease Oct. 29, '64.
Silver, George W.	19	6 B	Oct. 1, '61	Discharged Oct. 29, '62.
Silver, Henry	18	6 B	Oct. 1, '61	Discharged Sept. 25, '62. Wounded.
Slack, Ransom A.	20	6 B	Sept. 20, '61	Pro. Corporal. Wounded. Mustered out Oct. 28, '64.
Slate, Henry W.	18	17 D	Feb. 25, '64	Mustered out July 14, '65.

Names	Age	Reg.	Co.	Enlistment	Remarks
Smalley, John G.	21	3	F	June 1, '61	Discharged May 19, '63.
Sproat, Edward M.	18	4	B	Aug. 14, '61	Killed in action at Fredericksburg, Dec. 13, '62.
Taylor, George W.	26	6	B	Aug. 30, '61	Deserted July 18, '63.
Taylor, Henry	19	9	K	Sept. 7, '64	Deserted October, 15, '64.
Thompson, Bernard	30	Cav.	I	Aug. 24, '64	Mustered out Aug. 9, '65.
Tillerson, William	19	6	B	July 30, '62	Transferred to Vet. Res. Corps Sept 1, '63. Mustered out July 12, '65.
Tracy, Fred	18	17	I	June 21, '64	Transferred to Vet. Res. Corps Apr. 29, '65. Mustered out Aug. 22, '65.
Turner, Silas N.	23	6	B	Aug. 14, '62	Died Jan. 6, '63.
Wallace, Martin L.	29	7	H	Jan. 19, '62	Discharged Oct. 15, '62.
Welch, Patrick	26	7		Sept. 8, '64	Deserted. No further record.
Whitcomb, Chas. B.	18	17	I	Feb. 10, '64	Mustered out July 14, '65.
Wilkey, James H.	23	10	E	Jan. 4, '64	Transferred to Vet. Res. Corps Nov. 25, '64. Mustered out Aug. 18, '65.
Willey, Danforth	40	7	H	Jan. 28, '62	Died July 29, '62, at Baton Rouge, La
Wright, Alexis B.	43	9	A	Dec. 29, '63	Died Mar. 25, '65.
Wright, Thomas K. G.	23	6	B	Sept. 6, '61	Corporal. Transferred to 12th Mich Regt. Feb. 20, '62.
Wright, John H.	22	6	B	Sept. 7, '61	Re-en. Jan. 5, '64. Discharged for promotion in 3rd Battery. 1st Lieut. July 26 '64. Honorably discharged May 29, '65.
Yarrington, Harvey J.	31	6	B	Aug. 16, '62	Pro. Corporal June 5, '65. Discharged May 12, '65.
Yarrington, Horace	23	6	B	Aug. 18, '62	Transferred to Vet. Res. Corps Dec. 14, '64. Discharged July 1, '65.
Yarrington, Merrill E.	21	9	A	Jan. 2, '64	Pro. Corporal June 5, '65. Mustered out Dec. 1, '65.
Yarrington, Wm. P.	21	9	A	Jan. 4, '64	Pro. Corporal Feb. 18, '65. Mustered out June 22, '65.

## VOLUNTEERS FOR ONE YEAR (ARMY—4)

Bartlett, Charles H.	19	7	H	Feb. 20, '65	Mustered out of service July 18, '65.
Jenks, John E.	21	9	I	Sept. 3, '64	Mustered out of service June 19, '65.
Johnsen, James	23	8	I	Mar. 11, '65	Dishonorably discharged and sentenced to five years hard labor May 21, '65.
Terry, Julius	34	6	H	Sept. 12, '64	Discharged June 3, '65.

## VOLUNTEERS FOR ONE YEAR (NAVY—8)

Clough, William W.	Davis, Frank A.	Sproat, James S.
Clough, Thomas S.	Gordon, Charles F.	(Two enlistments)
Colburn, Myron S.	Powers, Chandler W.	Waterman, John

## VOLUNTEERS FOR NINE MONTHS (31)

Names	Age	Reg.	Co.	Enlistment	Remarks
Alger, Aaron P.	27	16	H	Sept. 15, '62	Mustered out of service Aug. 10, '63.
Ballard, Edwin L.	30	16	K	Sept. 15, '62	Mustered out of service Aug. 10, '63.
Benson, Levi A.	18	16	K	Sept. 15, '62	Discharged Jan. 22, '63. Died at Norwich Apr. 9, '64.
Brown, John B.	24	16	K	Sept. 15, '62	Mustered out of service Aug. 10, '63.

Names	Age	Reg.	Co.	Enlistment	Remarks
Brown, William L.	23	16	K	Sept. 15, '62	Mustered out of service Aug. 10, '63.
Caswell, Charles	40	16	K	Sept. 15, '62	Mustered out of service Aug. 10, '63.
Colburn, Richard A.	18	16	K	Sept. 15, '62	Mustered out of service Aug. 10, '63.
Converse, Charles B.	20	16	K	Sept. 15, '62	Corporal. Reduced to the ranks by request.
Currier, Daniel Q.	43	16	K	Sept. 15, '62	Mustered out of service Aug. 10, '63.
Cutting, Orange P.	19	16	K	Sept. 15, '62	Died of disease near Union Mills, Va., Feb. 28, '63.
Danforth, William A.	20	16	K	Sept. 15, '62	Mustered out of service Aug. 10, '63.
Fowler, Lewis H.	18	16	K	Sept. 15, '62	Mustered out of service Aug. 10, '63.
Hawkins, Henry G.	25	16	K	Sept. 15, '62	Pro. Corporal. Mustered out of service Aug. 10, '63.
Holt, Franklin	18	16	H	Sept. 15, '62	Mustered out of service Aug. 10, '63.
Huggett, David H.	23	16	K	Sept. 15, '62	Mustered out of service Aug. 10, '63.
Hutchinson, Edsen	44	16	K	Sept. 15, '62	Mustered out of service Aug. 10, '63.
Hutchinson, Samuel	36	16	K	Sept. 15, '62	Captain. Resigned Jan 3, '63.
Hutchinson, Wm. H.	26	16	K	Sept. 15, '62	Wagoner. Reduced to the ranks by request.
Jenne, Lemuel R.	37	16	K	Sept. 15, '62	Mustered out of service Aug. 10, '63.
Kelley, Michael	28	16	K	Sept. 15, '62	Wounded at Gettysburg. Mustered out of service Aug. 10, '63.
Marcotte, Thomas	25	16	K	Sept. 15, '62	Discharged Feb. 11, '63.
Messenger, Benj. F.	21	16	K	Sept. 15, '62	Mustered out Aug. 10, '63.
Morris, George S.	21	16	K	Sept. 15, '62	Corporal. Mustered out Aug. 10, '63.
Slack, Herbert B.	18	16	K	Sept. 15, '62	Discharged Nov. 27, '62.
Swasey, Chas. L.	24	16	K	Sept. 15, '62	Mustered out Aug. 10, '63.
Thurstin, George R.	22	16	K	Sept. 15, '62	Mustered out Aug. 10, '63.
Thurstin, Harrison H.	21	16	K	Sept. 15, '62	Mustered out Aug. 10, '63.
Tracey, James B.	18	16	K	Sept. 15, '62	Mustered out Aug. 10, '63.
Waterman, Chas. H.	20	16	K	Sept. 15, '62	Mustered out Aug. 10, '63.
Wood, Chas. P.	24	16	K	Sept. 15, '62	Pro. Corporal Feb. 1, '63.
Wood, Rodolphus W.	35	16	K	Sept. 15, '62	Mustered out Aug. 10, '63.

## FURNISHED UNDER THE DRAFT OF 1863 (17)

## a—ENTERED SERVICE (1)

Shattuck, Samuel W. 22 Adjutant 8th Vt. Vols. Oct. 20, '63. Pro. Capt. Co. H Nov. 24, '64, Wounded at Cedar Creek, Oct. 19, '64. Mustered out June 28, '65.

## b—PROCURED SUBSTITUTES (3)

Neal, James L. Pattrell, Oscar L. Walker, Daniel A.

## c—PAID COMMUTATION (8)

Bartlett, Edson Johnsen, Albert R. Turner, N. G., Jr.  
 Burton, Henry C. Sargent, William Waterman, Wm. T.  
 Currier, Ambrose B. Strong, Calvin

## ENROLLED MEN WHO FURNISHED SUBSTITUTES (5)

Blanchard, Asa	Bradley, Hial	Slack, George W.
Bradley, Edwin	Lyman, Augustus P.	

## MISCELLANEOUS (9)

Not credited by name to the town.



## CHAPTER XII

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### EDUCATIONAL

From the town records it appears that the first attempt to divide the town into school districts, was at a town meeting held November 19, 1782, when John Slafter, Elijah Brownson, Ithamar Bartlett, Joseph Loveland, Paul Bingham, Joseph Hatch, Daniel Baldwin, Abel Wilder and Samuel Brown, Jr., were made a committee for that purpose. Soon thereafter the committee reported that they "could effect nothing on the business of their appointment," and were discharged. No further move in town meeting towards districting the town for school purposes appears to have been made until March 30, 1785, when, on petition of persons residing in the southeastern part of the town, the territory, to be described, was embraced in a district designated as the "First School District: Beginning at the southeast bound of Norwich; thence running on the line between Hartford and Norwich, two miles; thence northerly so wide as to include Benjamin Hatch and Benjamin Burton and Mr. John Knight; thence easterly so as to take into s'd district Nathaniel Brown, Esq., Esquire Elisha Partridge and the Rev. Lyman Potter; thence due east to Connecticut River."

At a town meeting held March 14, 1791, districts Nos. 1 to 12, both inclusive, were established; March 13, 1798, district No. 13 was organized; No. 14 (from the consolidation of districts 9 and 10) in 1818; No. 15 (Bicknell), in 1827; No. 16, March, 1828; No. 17, June, 1828; No. 19, March, 1834; No. 20, Oct. 20, 1834; No. 18 (Podunk), 1841.

At a town meeting held in May, 1834, it was "voted to set off Ira Baxter, Isaac Partridge, Cyrus Partridge, and Calvin P. Newton's Cushman farm, and the Widow Bissell and the Olcott house she lives in, to District No. 4."

In March, 1836, No. 19 District (established in March, 1834) having, it is supposed, become extinct, another district of like designation

was established on the territory now called No. 5 (Upper River). In September following the district was renumbered 21.

At the annual meeting held in March, 1824, the town "voted to choose a committee to visit the several schools in Norwich the year ensuing, and to report according to their improvement, and to distribute such donations as they may receive from individuals, to the schools which, in their opinion, have made the best progress in learning during the term, and make return to the next March meeting." The following named persons constituted this committee: "Rev. Samuel Goddard, John Brown, Elijah Boardman, Rev. Jas. W. Woodward, Sewall Gleason, Asa Lord, Horace Hatch, Col. Alba Stimson, John Wright, Esq."

At the March meeting in 1825, it was "voted to appropriate \$32.00 to the several districts in Norwich, to be divided as follows: \$2.00 to each district, to be divided by the teachers, with the advice of the committee, to those scholars in each school who, in their opinion, have made the best progress, and the remaining \$4.00 to the school or schools that in the opinion of the committee have made the best progress in learning during the winter."

"*Voted*, further, that the Committee appointed to visit the several School districts, be requested to examine the teachers in each School district, and if they consider that they are not qualified to keep school, to make report to the Committee of that district or districts, and if such teachers shall not then be dismissed and others procured who are qualified, such district shall receive no share of the money so appropriated." [This is the earliest instance of school supervision known to the writer in Vermont, as instituted by town authority.]

It was also "*Voted* that the Treasurer be directed to pay Rev. Samuel Goddard \$14,—for the services he performed in visiting the several school districts in Norwich the past winter."

We have no knowledge of Prudential Committees for Schools earlier than 1828, in which year Rev. Sam'l Goddard, Alba Stimson, John Wright, Dr. Horace Hatch, and Eleazer J. Boardman served in that capacity. The committees for later years were: 1829, Rev. Sam'l Goddard, Rev. J. W. Woodward, Col. Alba Stimson, A. Loveland, Cyril Pennock; 1830, Rev. S. Goddard, Rev. J. W. Woodward, Alba Stimson, Dr. Ira Davis, Dr. Horace Hatch; 1831, Rev. Samuel Goddard, Ira





HIGH SCHOOL BUILDING, NORWICH VILLAGE  
ERECTED IN 1898

Davis, Rev. J. H. Woodward, Paul W. Brigham, Col. Alba Stimson; 1832 and 1833, Thos. Hall, Alba Stimson, Ira Davis. From 1846 to 1857, the office of School Superintendent (under a new law) was filled by Dr. Shubael Converse, who served four years; Col. Alba Stimson, who served three years; Dr. Ira Davis, whose term was two years; and M. M. Davis, E. B. Emerson, and Prof. J. D. Butler, each of whom served one year.

The number of scholars in the several school districts in Norwich, as returned by the District Clerks in March, 1826, was 635, of which number 136 were in District No. 1. In 1779, as per returns made that year, the number was 552. In 1886, fifteen districts supported schools, with 220 scholars in attendance.

Mr. Chas. E. Ensworth says that he has the authority of the late Mr. Roswell Wright for stating that the first district school building in town stood on or near the site of the present "vestry"; that Mr. Wright, when a boy, attended school there, walking from his father's home on what is now known as "Dutton Hill," with Adriance Hatch (grandfather of the late Abel P. Hatch) whose home was further west, in a house occupied later by Neal, and still later by Pettes until it was destroyed by fire several years since.

As the following interesting petition is in close touch with the present subject, we will give it a place in this article:

#### PETITION

"Whereas a number of the inhabitants of the town of Norwich Living on the road from James Johnson's to Humphrey Balls and some elsewhere have been great sufferers for want of a School that would Commode us those schools that have been kept here to fore the nearest has been so far of that we have had little or no profit thereby— We therefore whose names are hereunto set beg leave to inform the good people of this town that we can not send our children to the School house by Lieut. John Slafters without great trouble because of the length of way and also by reason of the roads not being much traveled we therefore think it very discommojeus and therefore burdensome for us to send or belong to the School at the S'd Slafters we therefore wish the Gentlemen Committee that was appointed by this town would consider our burden and remember that we want freedom and privileges with our Bretheren we think the Committee Men of



Reason and Wisdom and therefore we hope for a hearing in this matter.'"

[This part of the petition is missing ; the indications are that it was cut off with a sharp instrument. Probably the date and names of other petitioners were on the detached piece.]

" John Armstrong  
Ithamar Bartlett  
Humphrey Ball  
Anderson Miner  
Johnson  
Jacob Sawyer  
Calvin Johnson  
John Miles  
John W. Armstrong  
Joseph Brown  
Joseph Cook  
Titus D. Hammond  
Benjamin Burt

The brick school-building at the lower end of Norwich village was built by the late Harvey Burton, Esq., in 1845; and was used for school purposes until 1888, when the two village districts were consolidated, the consolidated district having its school in the north one of the former University buildings.

By an Act of the Legislature, passed in 1892, the old district organization for caring for schools was abolished, and the present town system put in force.

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The Windsor County Grammar School was granted a charter by the legislature of the State, June 17, 1785, while in session in Norwich. How soon it went into operation we are unable to say;—probably very soon—although the action of the legislature in October, 1788, legalizing a lottery for the purpose of raising money to complete the school building, might indicate a later date. One Ashur Hatch was its first and only teacher until the school was removed to Royalton, Vt., in 1807, and he was also the first school teacher in town of whom we have any record. Mr. Hatch was a son of John Hatch, Jr. He graduated at Dartmouth College in 1779, married Lucy Story in 1789, removed to Brookfield, Vt., in 1791, and died there in 1826, aged seventy-three years.

Among the scholars who attended the school were John Bush, Roswell Olcott, Thomas Brigham, Stephen Burton and Mills Olcott, after-

wards men of note in town. The school building stood where the Congregational Church in Norwich village now stands, and was used for school purposes until 1838, when it was moved away and converted into a dwelling house. It is now the home of Lucius Hibbard, at the north end of the village. Previous to its removal the building had been used by both districts on the "Plain" for school purposes, the upper district using the north room and the lower, or south district, the south room: In time friction arose between the two districts, resulting in the north district engaging "Uncle" Chauncey Hunt to haul the structure away to their end of the village, which service he performed, though not to his pecuniary advantage, because of subsequent litigation growing out of that act. After the removal of the building, the school in the south district was kept in the north university building; in a building that stood in the forks of the highway near the railroad bridge, south of the depot, and at other places, until the erection of the brick schoolhouse in that district in 1845, the north, or upper, district using a building erected for that purpose.

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The Norwich Classical and English Boarding School was incorporated by the legislature of Vermont November 8, 1867, and went into operation the following year. The names of the corporators were: William Sewall, Henry Blood, Henry Hutchinson, John Dutton, Sylvester Morris, W<sup>m</sup> E. Lewis, Joseph L. Loveland, James Burnham, Samuel Goddard, Franklin L. Olds, and their associates and successors. The school occupied the building (North Barracks) formerly belonging to Norwich University, which had transferred to it all its right and title to the same previous to its removal to Northfield in 1866. This building was repaired and refurnished at an expense (by subscription among the townspeople, chiefly) of over \$3,000.

The school was opened in December, 1867, with quite encouraging prospects; but with a frequent change of teachers the patronage steadily declined for about ten years, becoming extinct in 1877,—thus sharing the fate of most of the unendowed high schools and academies throughout the State. During its brief existence it served a useful purpose. Several young men were fitted for college, and others of both sexes prepared themselves for teaching and for active life. The prin-

cipals were: W. H. Gilbert, 1868; C. P. Chase, 1869; C. E. Putney, 1870-73; E. P. Sanborn, 1874; W. W. Morrill, 1875; W. H. Ray, 1876; D. S. Brigham, 1877.

## CHAPTER XIII

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### THE A. L. S. AND M. ACADEMY

Among the well known educational institutions in our land during the early part of the past century, was the American Literary, Scientific, and Military Academy, the forerunner of Norwich University, founded by the late Capt. Alden Partridge in 1819, in Norwich, his native town.

The corner-stone of the Academy building\* was placed August 4, 1819, and September 20th of the following year the institution was opened for the reception of cadets.

From Captain Partridge's knowledge of the system of education in force in the higher seminaries of learning in our country, he was convinced that no truly American system of education—such as was designed to meet the needs of the large majority of the young men of the country—was within their reach. It was with a view to remedy that defect that he established this institution, which during the first year of its existence had an attendance of one hundred pupils, and thereafter—until 1825—the annual attendance rapidly increased, at one time being nearly two hundred.

The character of the patronage accorded to this newly launched academy was highly flattering to its founder and its friends. The attendance from the southern states was very large—undoubtedly a larger percentage, by far, than any other northern educational institution was favored with; many of whom, in after years, with numbers of their northern classmates, honored themselves and their *Alma Mater*.

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\*This building was constructed of brick, was four stories high and forty-seven by one hundred feet on the ground, and was situated just south of the present high school building, and near the east end of the now vacant lot opposite the residence of Mrs. William E. Lewis.

April, 1825, the academy was removed to Middletown, Conn., for reasons believed by Captain Partridge to promise a more successful future to the institution than would accrue to it by its remaining at Norwich. While at Middletown—a period of three years—its success was even larger, in many respects, than when at Norwich, the number of cadets in attendance at one time being nearly or quite three hundred.

While at Norwich the institution was a private undertaking by Captain Partridge,—the ground, buildings, and other material being owned by him.

In 1835, the Academy became “Norwich University,” by virtue of an act of incorporation granted by the legislature of Vermont the previous year. Captain Partridge remained at the head of the institution until 1843, and soon after sold the buildings and grounds to the Trustees of the University.

In 1845, a rival military school, under the superintendency of Colonel T. B. Ransom, had a home in a wooden building that stood a little south and west of the other academy building; but its duration was short, and its attendance small. Subsequently the building was moved to the opposite side of the highway, and from a home for mental culture became Mr. David Morrill’s paint shop.

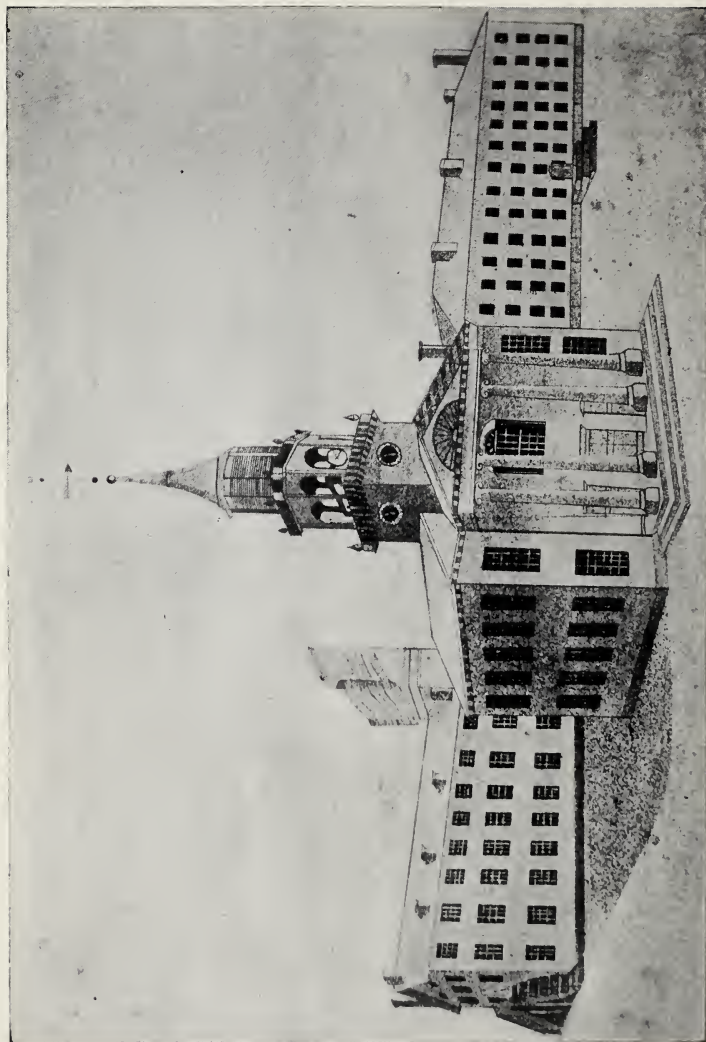
In 1830-1, a building designed for a boarding house for the cadets at the University was erected just north of the one first built, and on the site of the present high-school building.

#### NORWICH UNIVERSITY

There was one feature in the scheme of education established at Norwich University which honorably distinguished it from nearly all other similar institutions of its time in New England. From the first it was wholly free from sectarian influence. This principle was prominently set forth in its charter as drawn by its founder, Captain Partridge, which provided “that no rules, laws or regulations of a sectarian character, either in religion or politics, should be adopted or imposed; nor shall any student ever be questioned or controlled on account of his religious or political belief by the Board of Trustees or the Faculty of said institution, either directly or indirectly.” In his prospectus of the University, declaring the principles upon which it was founded, Captain Partridge begins as follows:—“Everything of







NORWICH UNIVERSITY BEFORE 1852

THE CONGREGATIONAL CHURCH PREVIOUS TO ITS REMOVAL TO ITS PRESENT SITE IN 1853

a *sectarian character in religion* is utterly excluded from its walls. The founders of this Institution, as well as the legislature of Vermont which granted the act of incorporation, believed that there was no natural or necessary connection between the propagation of *sectarian dogmas*, and education rightly understood. They believed that the great object of education should be to prepare youth in the best possible manner for the correct and efficient discharge of the great duties of life, in any situation in which fortune or circumstances may place them, by the due cultivation and improvement of the *physical and moral energies*, and the storing of their minds with useful human knowledge. They believed that by such a system our youth would become *patriotic citizens* and useful members of society, instead of going forth into the world *bigoted sectarians* and *wrangling theologians*, aiming to stir up excitements and introduce discord into the community, thereby destroying that respect which the great body of the people feel for pure religion, and inflicting upon it serious injury. Good morals, however, and a sacred regard for the great principles of religion, as understood and revered by the great majority of the people, are strictly and earnestly inculcated. The students are required to attend divine service on the Sabbath, except such as have *conscientious scruples* to doing so. Those who do not attend church, are strictly required to remain in their rooms during church time. The reading and careful examination of the Bible are earnestly enjoined upon all."

Colonel Ransom, too, soon after assuming the duties of president, after quoting (in the annual catalogue of 1843-4) from the act of incorporation of the University as above recited, proceeds to say: "From these extracts it will be seen that the University is based on broad and liberal principles, both in respect to politics and religion, and that it recognizes the creed of no sect or party,—thus being modeled after, and corresponding to, the great civil and political institutions of our country, and suited to the character of a free people.

\* \* \* \* \*

"To give our youth an education that shall be *American* in its character—to enable them to *act* as well as to *think*, to *execute* as well as to *conceive*,\* to 'tolerate all opinions when reason is left free to com-

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\*The italics in the above extracts are by Captain Partridge and Colonel Ransom.

bat them,' to make moral, patriotic, efficient and useful citizens, and to qualify them for all those high responsibilities resting upon a citizen of this free republic—was the design of the founders of this College.'"

It is believed that the character and policy of the University, as above outlined, was ever faithfully adhered to by each of the above broad-minded and liberal men. It would be difficult, indeed, to imagine either Captain Partridge or Colonel Ransom condescending to revoke the engagement of a Commencement orator selected and paid by their students, on account of the supposed heterodox opinions of such orator on topics of current discussion; or to think of them as engaged in *borrowing permanently* from the libraries of Norwich University, books donated by the students themselves, lest their minds should become infected by theological heresies thought to be contained in such books, as has repeatedly been done by the faculty of a neighboring institution even in recent years.

The service that Norwich University did for the country, in furnishing a supply of trained and competent officers for commanding and drilling the armies which the loyal North sent into the field during the first years of the rebellion, can hardly be overestimated. The following number of graduates from Norwich University, with their rank in the service, is taken from the history of that institution, lately published, viz:—

## ARMY:

Major Generals	6	Surgeons with rank of Major	10
Brigadier Generals	8	Assistant Surgeons with rank of	
Surgeon Generals	1	Captain	7
Colonels with brevet rank of Brig-		Captains	155
adier Generals	14	First Lieutenants	68
Colonels	35	Second Lieutenants	23
Lieutenant Colonels	34	Non-commissioned officers and	
Majors	24	enlisted men	82
		Total	467

## NAVY:

Admirals	1	Chaplains	1
Rear-Admirals	2	Commanders	2
Commodores	6	Lieutenant Commanders	1
Captains	7		
		Total	20







NORWICH UNIVERSITY 1862  
NORTH BARRACKS      SOUTH BARRACKS

The above honorable list includes George Dewey, Admiral, U. S. Navy; and (natives of Norwich) G. A. Converse, rear-admiral, U. S. Navy; G. P. Colvocoresses, captain, U. S. Navy; Edward B. Williston and T. E. G. Ransom, brigadier-generals, U. S. Army.

In response to an urgent call for troops for the defense of Washington, in the early summer of 1862, a company of cavalry was raised at Hanover, N. H., composed of students from Dartmouth College to the number of about forty, who were joined by twenty cadets from Norwich University, by a few college graduates and friends of the students, and three or four from Bowdoin College to make up a full cavalry troop of eighty-two men. Mr. S. S. Burn of the Junior class of Dartmouth, who was the prime mover in the enterprise, was chosen captain and Theodore H. Kellogg of Hillsboro, O., and Wm. H. Stevens of Woodstock, Vt., first and second lieutenants. This is said to have been the only instance of a military organization composed distinctively of college students that served in the Union Army during the war. As there was no cavalry corps then forming in either Vermont or New Hampshire, the company offered their services to Governor Sprague of Rhode Island, who was recruiting a squadron of mounted men, and were promptly accepted.

An interesting little volume called *The College Cavaliers*, published by Mr. S. B. Pettengill, of Grafton, Vt., who was one of the Dartmouth students composing the company, shows that they did gallant service for the country during the three months' campaign (the period of their enlistment) in which they were engaged. The company left Hanover for Providence June 18th, where they were joined with another company raised in that city to form the seventh squadron of Rhode Island cavalry. Here they received their equipment and were drilled a few days by Major A. W. Corliss, who had been appointed to the command of the detachment. The squadron reached Washington June 30th, and remained near that place and Alexandria, Va., during most of July under constant drill. About the 1st of August they were ordered to the Shenandoah Valley, and were attached to the infantry brigade of General Julius White of Indiana. In this vicinity they were engaged in active service for several weeks, doing picket duty, making reconnaissances and pursuing rebel raiders, until, early in September, on the advance of General Lee with the

whole Confederate Army into Maryland, they were shut up with ten thousand Union soldiers in Harper's Ferry, under the command of Col. D. H. Miles. With the other Union Cavalry to the number of about two thousand, belonging to Colonel Miles' division, the "College Cavaliers" escaped capture by resolutely cutting their way through the rebel lines then completely investing the place, on the night preceding the surrender, September 15th.

The term of service for which they had enlisted was now just expiring, but they generously volunteered to remain until after the battle of Antietam and the hasty retreat from Maryland of the rebel army had relieved the country from immediate alarm and anxiety. They were mustered out of service at Providence October 1, 1862, having done considerable skirmishing with the enemy, although not present in any important engagement, and having received the highest praise of their commanding officers for bravery and good conduct. None of their number fell in battle. Cadet A. W. Coombs, of Thetford, died of typhoid fever at Winchester, Va., about the middle of August. Two others were captured by the enemy about the same time, were taken to Richmond, and after a brief stay in Libby Prison were discharged in time to be mustered out with their comrades at Providence. We append a list of the Norwich Cadets who served in this company, with name, rank, and residence:—

Theodore H. Kellogg, First Lieutenant, Hillsboro, O.  
Tillinghas, Adjutant.

Bush, Sergeant Major.

Henry E. Alvord, First Sergeant, Greenfield, Mass.

George A. Bailey, Corporal, Woodstock, Vt.

Douglas Lee, Corporal, Lenox, Mass.

W. L. Burnap, Private, Grafton, Vt.

A. W. Coombs, Private, Thetford, Vt.

W<sup>m</sup> S. Dewey, Private, Quechee, Vt.

E. J. Everett, Private, Greenfield, Mass.

C. W. Gregg, Private, Boston, Mass.

W<sup>m</sup> S. Goodwin, Private, Boston, Mass.

A. T. Hastings, Private, West Medway, Mass.

W. S. Hazelton, Private, Strafford, Vt.

Arthur Morey, Private, Norwich, Vt.

- A. L. Papanti, Private, Boston, Mass.
- H. N. Phillips, Private, Greenfield, Mass.
- C. W. Smith, Private, Washington, Vt.
- F. H. Walcott, Private, New York Mills, N. Y.
- E. P. Walcott, Private, Utica, New York.

## CHAPTER XIV

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### POLITICAL PARTIES IN NORWICH

The strength of the great political parties that have divided the suffrages of the country almost since the union of the States under the Constitution has usually been pretty evenly balanced in Norwich. Elections have been sharply contested, and party feeling has frequently run high. Up to the formation of the Republican party (1854 or 1855) a majority of the voters in town generally ranged themselves with the political disciples of Jefferson and Jackson, though on several occasions, notably in the Harrison campaign of 1840, their ascendancy was successfully contested by the Whigs. In the state election of 1854, the Democrats lost the hold upon the town which they had maintained with few interruptions for almost a quarter of a century. During the years that have succeeded, they have never, at any state or general election, succeeded in rallying a majority to the support of their candidates for office.

Inasmuch as the history of a town, in the larger forms of governmental action, unites and blends with that of the State and nation, we give a brief survey of the changes of political opinion in Norwich, as shown by the votes of the freemen at successive elections.

During the presidency of John Adams the old Federal and Republican parties took their definite shape. At this time, and until the second term of Jefferson's administration the political bias of the town was decidedly Federal. As presidential electors were chosen by the legislature until 1828, there was no popular vote for president in Vermont prior to the election of that year. Isaac Tichenor was the Federal candidate for governor from 1797 to 1810, and the records show that he received the support of the town for that office at nine out of the thirteen elections included in that period. In 1803 Jonathan Robinson, the Republican nominee, led Tickenor by a large majority in Nor-



wich, but in the next two years fell slightly behind. In 1807 and 1808 the Republicans were again ahead, giving Israel Smith a majority which he, however, lost again in 1809, in the town as he did also in the State, the embargo, Jefferson's pet measure for preventing war with Britain and France, proving very unpopular in New England.

Israel Smith was the first governor elected by the Republicans after party lines were strictly drawn in Vermont. In 1810, Republican ascendancy was well established in both town and State, Jonas Galusha being chosen governor in that year and holding the executive chair continuously till 1820, except the years 1813 and 1814, when Martin Chittenden, Federalist, defeated him in the legislature, there being no choice by the people. The Norwich Republicans, however, with whom the war was popular, encouraged by Lieutenant Governor Brigham and other leading townsmen, kept their ranks unbroken while the State reverted to Federalism.—The statement of the vote for governor in Norwich during these three years of war with England is as follows:—

1812 Jonas Galusha, Republican, 182; Martin Chittenden, Federalist, 100; Scattering, 9.

1813 Galusha, 165; Chittenden, 103; Scattering, 5.

1814 Galusha, 165; Chittenden, 108; Scattering, 9.

The steadfastness of the party vote on both sides at these elections shows the earnestness of politics at this time and proves that every ballot was counted. By like majorities, Pierce Burton, Republican, was chosen representative to the general assembly in 1812 and 1813, and Doctor Israel Newton in 1814, over Reuben Hatch, Federalist. Pierce Burton first represented the town in 1802 and again in 1805, 1809, 1810, and 1811—thus marking the growing preference for the Jeffersonian politics in the town.

After the close of the war, in 1815, there was a lull in party strife for ten or twelve years, resulting in the gradual disintegration of the old Federal and Republican parties and the bringing in of the so-called "era of good feeling" in politics (1820-1828). The volume of the popular vote which had reached an aggregate of over 35,000 in the State in 1814, but fell to 16,000 at the election of 1818 and to less than 12,000 in 1826, attests that partisan politics were now at a very low ebb in Vermont, and notes the subsidence of that party rage which culminated during the last year of the war.

During this period of harmony the town was represented in the legislature by Don J. Brigham, second son of Governor Brigham (1815-1820), by Aaron Loveland (1820-1824), and by Thomas Emerson (1824-1828). At the September election of 1823, Judge Loveland received all the votes but one cast for town representative, the total vote for governor being only sixty-one at the same election. That year probably witnessed the low water mark of political excitement during the first half century of Vermont history. In 1827 and 1828 there was a memorable contest between Thomas Emerson and Judge Loveland for the legislature, resulting in the choice of Mr. Emerson by a small majority each year—in 1828, by twenty-three votes out of a total of 369, a much larger number than had been cast at any previous election, and never exceeded afterwards except by a small excess in the presidential elections of 1840 and 1844.

A departure in national politics marked the accession of Andrew Jackson to the presidency in 1828, and in the years immediately following the Whig and Democratic parties were evolved out of somewhat diverse materials, and new affiliations of the voting masses took place. From 1830 to 1835, Anti-Masonry continued to be a disturbing element in the political cauldron, Vermont electing an Anti-Mason (William A. Palmer) to the gubernatorial chair in the years 1831 to 1835, and giving her solitary electoral vote to the Anti-Masonic candidate for president in 1832, William Wirt of Maryland. Anti-Masonry, however, never gained a firm foothold in Norwich. It reached the zenith of its popularity about the year 1833, when Palmer, Anti-Mason, received a plurality of five votes over Ezra Meech, Democrat, for governor. Even in that year, Captain Alden Partridge was chosen representative by 131 votes to ninety-five for Judge Loveland and seven scattering, and was re-elected in 1834, 1837, and 1839, in the latter year defeating Thomas Hazen, Whig, who had represented the town the year before after a close canvass against Doctor Ira Davis, Democrat. Captain Partridge was also the candidate of the Democratic party for Congress in 1830, 1834, 1836, and 1838, in the latter two years, when but two tickets were in the field, beating his Whig competitor, Honorable Horace Everett.

As early as 1834 the Democratic phalanx appears well organized and drilled in Norwich, and during the next twenty years it marched

steadily on, with the prestige of almost uninterrupted success. This period (1833-1854) may be fitly called the period of Democratic ascendancy in town. Of these twenty years the Democrats elected the representative in fourteen, the Whigs in but five, with no choice in one year. Of the five presidential elections occurring in the same time, the only decided success of the Whigs was that of 1840, when the tidal wave that carried General Harrison to the highest office in the land, and revolutionized the political control of a dozen States, engulfed the Norwich Democrats and gave the Whig electors a majority of sixty-one in a total poll of 382 votes. At every election but one (1840) for a score of years, the Democrats of Norwich gave their candidate for Congress, and in every year but three (1840, 1847, and 1851) their State ticket, a majority of votes in town,—or a *plurality* after the advent of the Free Soil party.

It must not be inferred, however, that the opposition to the Democracy was idle or indifferent in those years. Nearly every election was contested with desperate energy. Often the result was almost a drawn battle, decided by a narrow margin of less than a dozen votes. In twelve out of twenty consecutive years, the successful candidate for town representative was chosen on a slender majority of from six to sixteen votes in an aggregate of 300 to 350 ballots cast. In 1842 Doctor Ira Davis, Democrat, was elected by eleven majority and in the following year re-elected by the same number, on the third ballot. In 1845 and 1846 Doctor Converse, Whig, was successful, in the former year after six ballotings, and in the latter year by the fifth balloting, by six majority. In 1847 William Loveland, Whig, had eight majority on the seventh ballot, and in 1848 there was no choice after twelve ballotings. In 1851 Samuel Goddard, Whig, received eight majority on the fourth ballot, and in 1852 Lewis S. Partridge, Democrat, thirteen majority on the second ballot, and Mr. Partridge was re-elected the next year by seven majority in a total poll of 343 votes.

Meanwhile a new political organization based upon opposition to the extension of slavery was rapidly coming into notice. The anti-slavery sentiment early took firm root in Norwich. Beginning with the birth of the "Liberty Party" in 1840, when one vote was cast by Deacon Sylvester Morris for James G. Birney (who received but 319 in the State and some seven thousand in the whole country), the party gained

in numbers from year to year, and drew to itself some of the best material of both the old parties. As early as the year 1845 its voters easily held the balance of power between Whigs and Democrats—an advantage they were not slow to use to advance their party interests. They polled thirty-nine votes that year for William R. Slafter, for governor, and three years later gave Morrill J. Walker ninety-five votes for town representative. Their support was courted by both the old parties, chiefly by putting in nomination men who sympathized with their distinctive opinions. By their help Doctor Shubael Converse, a Whig of anti-slavery proclivities, was sent to the legislature in 1845 and 1846. But in 1849-50 the State witnessed a general coalition of Free Soilers and Democrats, and Horatio Needham, Free Democrat, received a majority of eighty-three in Norwich over Carlos Cooledge, Whig, who was made governor by the legislature, for want of an election by the popular vote.

The question of slavery extension had now become the absorbing question of the hour, in which all the old political differences were speedily sunk and forgotten. A general break-up of existing parties was at hand and a recombination of their elements into new forms. Before 1856 the Whig party had disappeared forever in Vermont, and in the presidential election of that year Norwich gave its suffrage in a proportion of more than two to one to the candidates of the young and vigorous Republican organization of the country. Such was the answer of the town and State to the imperious demand of the American Slavocracy, that slavery be made national and freedom sectional, through inhuman Fugitive Slave Laws, repeal of the time-honored Missouri Compromise, and Border-Ruffianism in Kansas. With the election of Abraham Lincoln in 1860, this new party took the helm of administration and a new chapter was opened in the political history of the country, the record of whose pages is not yet complete. \* This record, familiar to the memory of living men and pregnant with events of mighty import to the American people and to the human race, it will be the task of the future historian to trace.

#### VOTES FOR PRESIDENT—1828 to 1900

1828

John Quincy Adams, Nat. Republican

172

Andrew Jackson, Democrat

35



1832	
William Wirt, Anti-Mason	42
Henry Clay, Nat. Republican	73
Andrew Jackson, Democrat	43
1836	
Martin VanBuren, Democrat	137
William H. Harrison, Whig	93
1840	
William H. Harrison, Whig	221
Martin Van Buren, Democrat	160
James G. Birney, Liberty	1
1844	
Henry Clay, Whig	164
James K. Polk, Democrat	163
James G. Birney, Liberty	12
1848	
Lewis Cass, Democrat	125
Zachary Taylor, Whig	112
Charles Francis Adams, Free Soil	96
1852	
Franklin Pierce, Democrat	129
Winfield Scott, Whig	119
John P. Hale, Free Soil	65
1856	
John C. Fremont, Republican	222
James Buchanan, Democrat	109
1860	
Abraham Lincoln, Republican	210
John C. Breckenridge, Democrat	92
Stephen A. Douglass, Democrat	7
1864	
Abraham Lincoln, Republican	216
George B. McClellan, Democrat	150
1868	
Ulysses S. Grant, Republican	228
Horatio Seymour, Democrat	109



1872	
Ulysses S. Grant, Republican	191
Horace Greeley, Democrat	30
Charles O'Connor, Democrat	32
1876	
Rutherford B. Hayes, Republican	194
Samuel J. Tilden, Democrat	157
1880	
James A. Garfield, Republican	235
Winfield S. Hancock, Democrat	116
Neal Dow, Prohibition	1
1884	
James G. Blaine, Republican	183
Grover Cleveland, Democrat	116
John P. St. John, Prohibition	15
1892	
Benjamin Harrison, Republican	154
Grover Cleveland, Democrat	75
1896	
William McKinley, Republican	194
William J. Bryan, Democrat	40
1900	
William McKinley, Republican	162
William J. Bryan, Democrat	60

## CHAPTER XV

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### POSTMASTERS AND POSTAL SERVICE

It was fifteen years after the admission of Vermont into the Federal Union, and forty years after the settlement of the town, before Norwich had a postoffice. The first postoffice was established at Norwich Plain, July 1, 1805, and Jacob Burton was appointed postmaster. Postmaster Burton kept the office in his harness shop on the main street of the village, nearly opposite the present residence of Mrs. Wm. E. Lewis. Probably the duties of the office were not so great as to interfere much with the prosecution of his trade. It is doubtful if Mr. Burton had more than two mails per week to distribute, and these were much smaller in bulk than either of the three daily mails now received at the village office. It is certain that less mail matter was then handled here in the course of a year than now in a week, although the territory accommodated at the office and the population of the town itself were each considerably greater than at present. It is safe to say, moreover, that the people now living in Norwich receive more letters and miscellaneous mail matter every year than did all the 150,000 inhabitants of Vermont in the year 1805. The postoffice is essentially a modern institution, whose importance and value increases year by year with cheaper postage and the general diffusion of cheap printed matter among the people.

At the time of the admission of Vermont into the Union, in 1791, there were only five postoffices in the State (at Brattleboro, Windsor, and Newbury on the Connecticut river, and at Bennington and Rutland, on the west side of the mountains), to accommodate a population of 85,000. In these towns, then the chief centers of population and business, postoffices had been established several years before by State authority, and the number of offices in the State was not ma-

terially increased for some time after the postal service was turned over to the Federal government. Meager as such mail facilities were, they were probably more liberal than were generally enjoyed by the people of the United States at that day. Indeed, the number of post-offices in the whole country was but seventy-five in 1790, and the five appropriated to Vermont, ludicrously inadequate as it seems to-day, with almost 500 postoffices within our borders, was more than three times what the State would have been entitled to, if distributed to the country strictly on the basis of population. From an early period it is probable that Norwich people had received more or less of their mail at Hanover, where a postoffice had been opened as early as 1793.

Previous to 1792, the mails in Vermont, as well as through the country, had been carried chiefly by post riders on horseback. During that year a new weekly mail stage was put on from Springfield, Mass., to Hanover, N. H., *via* Brattleboro, Charlestown, and Windsor. About 1807 a tri-weekly mail stage was run up the Connecticut river from Boston to Hanover, affording a mail every other day from the older parts of the country; and a few years later this line (now *via* Concord, N. H.) was extended from Hanover to Montpelier on the new turnpike through Norwich, Strafford, and Chelsea. This was the permanent mail route for many years. The mail stage left Hanover for Montpelier before light in the morning, stopping at all offices on the line for a change of mails. Col. Wm. E. Lewis, who acted as assistant in the postoffice at Norwich for a short time about 1830, thought that the mail pouches carried over this important mail route at that time were about equal in size to those which now bring the Norwich mail twice each day from the railroad station.

A postoffice was opened at Union Village January 1, 1830. This office, while within the limits of the town of Thetford, most conveniently supplies their mail to the inhabitants of the north part of Norwich. Morrill J. Walker was the first postmaster—an office which he held continuously for twenty-six years. Shortly after the building of the Connecticut and Passumpsic Rivers Railroad through Norwich, in 1848, another postoffice was established near the mouth of the Pompanoosuc, receiving its name from the river Pompanoosuc or Ompompanoosuc, an Indian word meaning "the place of very white stones." Here Benj. Preston was the first postmaster.

The following are the names of the postmasters at the several post-offices in town, and the term of office of each:

Joseph Burton appointed July 1, 1805; George Riley appointed Nov. 9, 1814; Cyrus Partridge appointed Jan. 1, 1818; Jason Allen appointed Apr. 17, 1820; Cyrus Partridge appointed Nov. 22, 1821; Roswell Shurtleff served 1834-1836; John Wright served 1837-1839; Baxter B. Newton served 1839-1841; Ira Davis served 1841-1849; Harvey Burton served 1849-1853; John Wright served 1853-1855; Lewis S. Partridge served 1855-1857; Edward M. Lewis served 1857-1861; Franklin L. Olds served 1861-1885; Lewis S. Partridge served 1885-1886; J. T. Morrison served 1886-1889; Edward W. Olds served 1889-1894; L. K. Merrill served 1894-1897; F. W. Hawley served 1897-1902; Edward W. Olds served 1902—present time.

It is not known where George Riley kept the office. Jason Allen kept office either in the house now occupied by Miss Sarah Tracey or just across the street where the late Dr. S. H. Currier resided. At different times Allen lived in both these houses. Cyrus Partridge (both terms), Roswell Shurtleff, John Wright (1st term), and Baxter B. Newton had the office where Henry Lary resides.

At first, Ira Davis kept the office in the south room of the brick building destroyed by fire December 29, 1889, just south of "Union Hotel," and part of the time in the small south annex to James Currier's house. During Harvey Burton's term the office was kept in a small building that stood between the present residences of William Bicknell and Edward W. Olds. The building was subsequently moved across the street and placed close to the north end of F. L. and E. W. Olds' store, where it yielded to the flames August 4, 1875. John Wright (2d term) kept the office in the north room of the brick building (owned by himself) where Ira Davis previously kept the office. Lewis Partridge (1st term) and Edward M. Lewis kept the office in a small building that stood on the west side of the street, just north of Charles E. Ensworth's premises, and quite close to the street. The building was placed there by E. W. Mattoon and used by him for a tailor's shop. The building is now the home of Abel Hebard, just north of the village. While Franklin L. Olds was postmaster, the office was kept in F. L. and E. W. Olds' store (where Hawley's store is). Lewis S. Partridge (2d term) had the office in a building just north of Olds' store. During the terms of Morrison and Hawley, the

office was kept in what is now Hawley's store. Edward W. Olds (1st term) kept the office in the north end of the brick building already mentioned, and later in his dwelling house. At present the office is in his store next south of the hotel. While L. K. Merrill was postmaster he kept the office in his store (now Merrill & Smith's store).

AT UNION VILLAGE—(OFFICE ESTABLISHED JANUARY 1, 1830)

Morrill J. Walker served 1830-1856; R. M. Gleason served 1856-1861; S. M. Gleason served 1861-1864; R. M. Gleason served 1864-1874; Anson West served 1874-1877; J. K. Blaisdell served 1877-1896; H. E. French served 1896-present time.

AT POMPANOSUC—(OFFICE ESTABLISHED 1849)

Benjamin Preston served 1849-1851; W. W. Reynolds served 1851-1854; Benjamin Preston served 1854-1857; B. G. Reynolds served 1857-1859; Isaac Pierce served 1859-1862; H. F. Reynolds served 1862-1868; J. M. Flint served 1868-1876; Hersey E. Kendall served 1876-1902; Cora L. Kendall served 1902-present time.

The office at West Norwich ("Beaver Meadow," of old) was established April 18, 1890, with Chauncey Smith, the present incumbent, as postmaster.

At Lewiston the office was established December 26, 1898, with George F. Kibling, postmaster, which position he has held continuously to date (1905).

The salary of the postmaster at the Norwich office, in 1823, was \$125.55. Only ten offices in the State paid a higher salary at that time.

From the information at hand, it appears that the first post route through Norwich was established in 1796, by virtue of an act of the legislature (then in session at Windsor) authorizing the laying out of a post road from the Massachusetts line to Newbury. Hon. Paul Brigham of Norwich, Lewis R. Morris of Springfield, and Oliver Gallup of Hartland were a committee to lay the route through Windsor county.

In the Vermont register for 1797 appears a list of several post routes already established in the State, designated by numbers. "No. 6" extended from Windsor to St. Johnsbury. The names of the several towns along the route are given, with the distances between them



and the names of the post riders. From Hartford to Norwich the distance given is two miles (probably from Hartford postoffice to Norwich south line), and Bunton as post rider ; from Norwich to Thetford, eleven miles, and Childs, post rider.

We regret that we are not able to give a more complete account of the early post routes through the town and of the post riders, and also to tell something of the stage drivers and their coaches, the arrival and departure of which was such an event in our little community.

## CHAPTER XVI

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### GROWTH AND DECLINE OF POPULATION

The population of Norwich has been steadily declining for more than seventy years, having reached its maximum in 1830, when it numbered 2,316 souls. By the census of 1900 it was 1,303, a loss of over one thousand since 1830. The end of the present decade will doubtless show a further shrinkage in the number of inhabitants. The following table records the population of Norwich by successive enumerations:

1771 (New York census, forty families)				206
1779* (120 families, estimated)				600
1791 (U. S. census)	1,158	1850 (U. S. census)		1,978
1800       “	1,486	1860       “		1,759
1810       “	1,812	1870       “		1,639
1820       “	1,985	1880       “		1,471
1830       “	2,316	1890       “		1,304
1840       “	2,218	1900       “		1,303

Where this decline in population is to end it would be useless to speculate. It is a phenomenon that arrests the attention of the most casual observer all through the country districts of New England. It is, perhaps, nowhere more noticeable than in some of the purely agricultural towns of Windham and Windsor counties. In illustration of this constant tendency to depopulation of the farming towns, we have compiled from the several censuses (1790-1880) the following table, showing the growth and decline of population in ten representative towns in this section of the state:—

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\*Taken by a political committee.

	1790	1800	1810	1820	1830	1840	1850	1860	1870	1880
Barnard	673	1,236	1,648	1,691	1,881	1,774	1,647	1,487	1,208	1,191
Strafford	845	1,642	1,805	1,921	1,935	1,761	1,540	1,506	1,290	1,181
Hartland	1,652	1,960	2,352	2,553	2,503	2,341	2,063	1,748	1,710	1,604
Norwich	1,158	1,486	1,812	1,985	2,316	2,218	1,978	1,759	1,639	1,471
Pomfret	710	1,106	1,433	1,635	1,867	1,774	1,546	1,376	1,251	1,139
Reading	747	1,120	1,505	1,603	1,409	1,363	1,171	1,159	1,012	953
Weathersfield	1,146	1,924	2,115	2,301	2,213	2,002	1,851	1,765	1,557	1,354
Westminster	1,601	1,942	1,925	1,974	1,737	1,546	1,721	1,300	1,238	1,377
Dummerston	1,501	1,692	1,704	1,658	1,592	1,263	1,645	1,021	916	816
Guilford	2,432	2,256	1,872	1,862	1,760	1,525	1,389	1,291	1,277	1,096
	16,364									12,182

It appears from these footings that the above named towns in 1880 contained about seventy-five per cent of the number of people they did eighty years earlier (in 1800) and less than sixty per cent of the population the same towns had at the time of greatest population, two or three decades later (1820-1830).

A thoughtful man might find a sort of melancholy interest in a ride through one of these depleted townships and a census of its deserted homesteads and its scores of abandoned farms. He would linger for a moment around the old cellar holes where a few scrubby lilacs and stunted rose bushes still survive and bloom in their season and where perchance an old chimney still stands intact in naked ghastliness, with the hearthstone and doorstone still in place, around which children played and the annual family gathering at Thanksgiving was assembled half a century ago. Not infrequently some emigrant to the West or elsewhere returns in his old age to Vermont, to revisit the home of his childhood and the scenes of early life as he recalls them fifty years back, to look upon such a picture. Such a person—if he has a touch of sentiment in him—will seek out the oldest inhabitant of the locality, and then the two will quietly sit down together, and sadly

“talk of the old familiar faces,

How some they have died and some they have left us;

\* \* \* \* all are departed—

All, all are gone, the old familiar faces.”

At the first enumeration of the inhabitants of eastern Vermont, as made by the authority of New York in 1771, Norwich was found to be the most populous of all the towns of Windsor County, having forty

families and 206 inhabitants.\* Windsor followed with 203, and Hartford was third with 190. The aggregate population of the county (ten towns reported) was then but 1,205, mostly confined to the first and second tiers of towns west of the Connecticut river. Twenty years later, in 1791, Hartland led all the towns of the county with 1,652 inhabitants, Woodstock and Windsor coming next with 1,605 and 1,542 respectively. Exceptional causes made the little town of Guilford (now numbering scarcely more than one thousand inhabitants), till after the year 1800, the most populous town in the state. In Norwich, the great falling off in the size of families in recent years is seen in the fact, that in the year 1800, the number of children of school age was 604, out of a total population of 1,486, while in 1880 with a nearly equal population (1,471) it was but 390.\*

In the removal of large numbers of the native-born inhabitants by emigration, we must find the principal cause of the decline of our rural population. Pre-eminently is this true of Norwich. The outflow of people began very early, and now for more than a century there has been one unbroken, living stream of emigration pouring over our borders. Several families that had first located here became, before the close of the Revolutionary War, the pioneer settlers of Royalton, Tunbridge, and Randolph. Some of the captives taken at the burning of Royalton in 1780, among them Mr. Elias Curtis, had previously been residents in Norwich. The families of Seaver, Hutchinson, Parkhurst, Cushman, and Morgan, whose names often appear on the early records of the towns just mentioned, were either derived from or closely connected with Norwich families of the same name. The original proprietors of the town of Randolph mostly belonged in Hanover and Norwich, and their meetings were held here for several years. Abel Curtis was clerk for the Randolph proprietors in 1778. Other Norwich proprietors were John Slafter, Elisha Burton, Simeon Curtis, and William Lewis. In the year 1793, Captain Aaron Storrs, also a pro-

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\*The New York Schedules show the following classification of the townspeople by age and sex at this census:—

Heads of families (males)	401	Females over sixteen	48
Males above sixteen and under sixty	66	Females under sixteen	39
Males under sixteen	53		
		Total females	87
Total males	119	Over sixteen (both sexes)	114
Unmarried males over sixteen	26	Under sixteen (both sexes)	92
Unmarried females over sixteen	8		

prietor, sold his homestead near the west end of the bridge between Norwich and Hanover, to Doctor Joseph Lewis, to lead a colony of settlers to Randolph. Mr. A. A. Storrs, at the time of present writing representative-elect to the legislature from that town, is a grandson of Captain Aaron Storrs.\* A little later the towns of Brookfield, Orange, Vershire, and Washington, in Orange County, received important accessions to their infant settlements from Norwich. The town of Washington was chartered to Major Elisha Burton of Norwich and others, by the legislature of Vermont, August 8, 1781—Jacob Burton was the first clerk of that town. Prominent citizens of Norwich were also grantees of Orange and Vershire, both chartered the same year, and interested themselves actively in promoting their settlement.

About the beginning of the present century, there was a large migration from Norwich into the then newly organized counties of the northern part of the state. Several young men of marked ability at that time left their native town to become prominent and honored citizens of the newer townships of Washington, Orleans, and Essex counties. Sylvanus and Daniel Baldwin, while quite young men, went to Montpelier then just being established as the permanent capital of Vermont. There the former built the first state house, and in 1810 the first cotton factory in this part of the country, while the latter became a leading merchant, and some time later founded the Vermont Mutual Fire Insurance Co.—was for many years its president, and the influential promoter of many other public enterprises, wherein he was ably seconded by Joseph Howes, another Norwich boy who followed the Baldwins to Montpelier in 1808. In 1804 Dan Carpenter, having studied law with Ebenezer Brown, Esq., and been admitted to the Windsor County bar, established himself in the new town of Waterbury, where he at once became a leading citizen and spent a long and useful life, filling many positions of honor and trust in the town and county. His brother, Luther Carpenter, had settled three or four years earlier in the town of Orange, with whose public affairs and interests he was closely identified for nearly fifty years, dying in 1861 at the age of eighty-three, having represented the town in the legislature four-

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\*About the year 1789, Captain Asa Story and Christopher Huntington emigrated to Randolph from Norwich with their families.



teen years, served as justice of the peace thirty-five years, as member of constitutional conventions, council of censors, and holding other important trusts,—in all, or nearly all, of which he was succeeded by his son, Carlos Carpenter, now a resident of Barre, at the ripe age of eighty. Besides the offices already mentioned, each of the above named gentlemen, with the single exception of Sylvanus Baldwin, held for several years the position of judge of the county court, and each of them, with the same exception, took for himself a wife from the vicinity of the old home, when ready to start out in life for himself. Luther Carpenter married Sarah Waterman of Norwich in 1803; Dan Carpenter married Betsey, daughter of Elisha Partridge, in 1805; young Howes married Patty, daughter of Abel Wilder, in 1808; and Daniel Baldwin married Emily Wheelock, a grand-daughter of the first president of Dartmouth College.

In 1801, William Baxter, son of Elihu Baxter of Norwich, and law student from the office of Honorable Daniel Buck, settled in the town of Brownington, Orleans county. Beginning married life the same year, with Lydia Ashley, a sister of Mrs. Daniel Buck, and with scarcely a dollar in his pocket, he soon became a leading lawyer and one of the wealthiest men in that section of the state. He secured the location of the Orleans County Grammar School at Brownington, and erected for it a new academy building at his own expense in 1824. Mr. Baxter died in 1826, at the age of forty-nine, leaving to his son, Honorable Portus Baxter of Derby, a munificent estate, and the better inheritance of a high reputation for integrity, business capacity, and public spirit, which never suffered in the keeping of the son.

Two years after the settlement of Wm. Baxter at Brownington, Capt. Benjamin Burton, after a residence of about twenty years in Norwich, removed with a large family of grown-up children to the town of Irasburg in the same county. With him went his brother, Jacob Burton, and quite a colony of Norwich families, who became pioneer settlers in the western part of Irasburg, which soon after took the name of Burton Hill, which it still keeps. One of the young men of this colony was Peter Thatcher, Jr., a great wit and comical genius, but more remarkable for his height, which was six feet, four inches. Captain Burton was a much respected citizen of his adopted town, where he lived to the advanced age of ninety-two, and his wife to the age of

ninety-four years. Mrs. Burton's maiden name was Hannah Griswold and her home was in Stonington, Conn. Maj. Oliver Griswold Burton and Col. Henry S. Burton, both of the United States Army, were son and grandson respectively of these parents.

Four years before Captain Burton went to Irasburg, in 1799, Dea. David Hibbard, who had come to Norwich from Coventry, Conn., to settle in 1782 or '83, removed to Concord in Essex county, with a large family of boys and girls. The first work of Deacon Hibbard was to establish a church at Concord, and to this church he ministered regularly, though a layman, until the settlement over it of Rev. Samuel Goddard in 1809. He was town clerk six years, and four years a member of the legislature from Concord. His son, David Hibbard, Jr., a self-made man and a lawyer practiced his profession in Concord for thirty years, holding the offices of judge of the county court, state's attorney, high sheriff, and town representative, and dying in 1852. Another son, Dyer Hibbard, was also judge and sheriff of the county, as well as representative four years. David Hibbard, 3rd, eldest son of David, Jr., represented Concord in the legislatures of 1838, '39, '40, '43, '44, '58, and '59, and was member of the council of censors in 1856. Asa Hibbard, another descendant, was assist. judge in 1857 and '58. The second son of David Hibbard, Jr., was Hon. Harry Hibbard of Bath, N. H., late a leading lawyer of the New Hampshire Bar, presiding officer of both branches of the state legislature, and six years (1849-1855) a member of Congress from the third district of New Hampshire. Harry Hibbard was born at Concord, Vt., June 1, 1816, and died at Bath, N. H., in 1872. He graduated at Dartmouth College in the class of 1835.

Hon. Daniel Buck left Norwich in 1809, removing to Chelsea, where he died in 1816. At the close of the war with Great Britain, his son, Daniel Azro Ashley Buck, resigned his commission in the regular army and commenced the practice of law at Chelsea. Between 1816 and 1836, he represented that town fourteen years in the state legislature, during six of which he served as Speaker of the House. He was also a member of Congress four years previous to 1830.

In the Vermont legislature of 1820 and the years immediately succeeding, there was gathered quite a brilliant galaxy of talent native born in Norwich. At the opening of the session of that year, Lieut.

Gov. Paul Brigham, full of years and honors, finally retired from that office and from the presidency of the Council which he had held for twenty-two years. In the Speaker's chair of the assembly sat the younger Buck, where his honored father had preceded him a generation earlier, executing the duties of the place with a promptness, ease and dignity which has perhaps never been excelled. Before him in their respective seats sat the two Carpenters, Luther of Orange and Dan of Waterbury, both veteran legislators, whose united years of service in that body covered a quarter of a century. There also was the sagacious Baxter from Brownington and one of the public-spirited and versatile Hibbards from Concord; while to represent the mother town was the erratic but gifted and scholarly Aaron Loveland. These men had all grown up as boys and playmates together in old Norwich twenty-five years before. They were a representation of which any town might justly be proud, and which few if any towns in the State have been able to match, I fancy, before or since. Any one of them, if called temporarily to the Speaker's chair, could have acquitted himself with credit, and the judiciary committee of the House might almost have been made up worthily from the sons of Norwich alone.

While the town was thus giving of its best blood to fill up the vacant places of our own State, the great tide of emigration to the West had already set in, which has known no ebb to this day. In the first year of the nineteenth century, Col. Jasper Murdock, having married Martha, daughter of Rev. Lyman Potter, persuaded his father-in-law to remove with him to Ohio, then the Northwest Territory, where he was interested in extensive land speculations. Two sons of Mr. Potter, both liberally educated at Dartmouth College during the period of their father's ministry in town, accompanied the family in their long and tiresome journey to the Western Reserve, at that time the very outpost of settlement and civilization. Of these sons, one became a farmer in Trumbull county, the other studied law and settled in New Lisbon, the county seat of Columbiana county. Both afterwards served in the legislature of the new state of Ohio. Colonel Murdock died of malarial fever at Steubenville in 1803, at the age of forty-three. He was a man of superior natural abilities that qualified him for either business or intellectual pursuits. He had popular manners, a handsome face and figure, an excellent education, with a spirit of enterprise

and an ambition which, in the wider field of action upon which he had just entered, would have carried him, if his life had been spared, into high public stations in his adopted state, and perhaps into the national Congress.

Representatives of other Norwich families sought new homes in the far West about this time. Alexander Bush, son of Capt. Timothy Bush and a graduate of Dartmouth in 1800, was, two years later, as far west as Franklinton, now Columbus, in central Ohio, where he died the same year. But previous to about the year 1820, the bulk of emigration from Norwich went to central, northern, and western New York, and occasionally to Pennsylvania and to Maine. As early as 1812, however, Thomas and Joseph Emerson had a flourishing mercantile business at Detroit, which was maintained for a considerable time.

The evidences of depopulation and disappearance of houses in Norwich seems to be especially marked at Beaver Meadow, and along the "turnpike," which thoroughfare can lay claim to less than one-half the dwellings that were there sixty years ago (so says one who resided there at that time), and the percentage of loss in population is probably greater than the percentage of loss of houses.

Table showing the comparative growth in population and wealth of Norwich and two adjacent towns on Connecticut River since settlement:

### I. POPULATION (1771—1880)

	1771	1791	1800	1810	1820	1830	1840	1850	1860	1870	1880	
Thetford		862	1,478	1,785	1,915	2,113	2,065	2,016	1,611	1,613	1,529	
NORWICH	203	1,158	1,486	1,812	1,985	2,316	2,218	1,978	1,759	1,639	1,471	3,000
Hartford	190	958	1,494	1,881	2,010	2,044	2,194	2,159	2,396	2,480	2,954	

### 2. GRAND LIST (1830—1886)

	1830	1840	1850	1860	1870	1880	1886	
Thetford	\$13,986	\$14,681	\$5,420	\$6,344	\$5,573	\$4,457	\$6,098	
NORWICH	15,933	18,590	5,362	5,579	5,075	4,432	7,286	\$13,384
Hartford	17,435	20,700	7,156	8,101	9,240	10,956	20,847	



It is interesting to note from the above figures, that these three towns, Norwich, Thetford, and Hartford, so similar in their situation, area, and natural resources, kept nearly abreast of each other for three quarters of a century, in material development and prosperity. Even the superior water-power of Hartford did not avail, until after the advent of railroads, to carry that town very considerably in advance of her sister townships. Since that period, however, the growth of Hartford has been steady and rapid until its population lacks less than fifty of being greater than that of the other towns combined, while the appraisal of its property stands to the united value of both the others in the ratio of 3 to 2.

#### NORWICH SURNAMES OF FAMILIES

(Numerous in town before the year 1800 and since become extinct)

Ashley	Bush	Hovey	Silver
Baldwin	Carpenter	Howes	Slafter
Baker	Carrier	Hunt	Smalley
Ball	Coit	Huntington	Smith (?)
Barrett	Crary	Jaquith	Stoddard
Baxter	Curtis	Miner	Story
Benton	Emerson	Morgan	Thatcher
Bissell	Fellows	Morse	Vinson
Bly	Freeman	Mosely	West
Branch	Gates	Murdock	White
Broughton	Geer	Newton	Wilder
Brayman	Grow	Olcott	Woodward
Brewster	Gould	Percival	Wright
Brownson	Hammond	Pike	Yeomans,
Buck	Hayward	Potter	Tolland, Ct.
Burnap	Hedges	Richards	
Burt	Hibbard	Roberts	
Burwash	Hopson	Seaver	

(Surnames of families of the same period still surviving in town)

Armstrong	Cook	Lord	Rogers
Bartlett	Cushman	Loveland	Sawyer
Boardman	Hatch	Lyman	Spear
Brigham	Hazen	Messenger	Stimson
Brown	Hutchinson	Nye	Turner
Burton	Johnson	Partridge	Waterman
Cloud	Lewis	Pattrell	



## CHAPTER XVII.

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### LOCAL NAMES

Of the little settlements in the township of Norwich which seem to be existing in the sunset of their former glory, may be mentioned Beaver Meadow, or West Norwich. This place presents a notable instance of that decline in population and decay of business interests in a rural community, of which Vermont affords many examples since the advent of railroads and the fever of western emigration set in.

For more than thirty years population, wealth, and enterprise have been drifting away from that section of the town. Probably the settlement reached the height of its prosperity previous to 1840. During the decade that preceded this date two churches were built here, a Baptist church in 1835, and Methodist church about two years later. Regular meetings were held, and full congregations gathered from the immediate neighborhood. Large families of children filled the schools, to the number of sixty pupils of a winter, sometimes. The village had for many years its well-stocked country store, and a variety of mechanics' shops. Intelligent and thrifty farmers cultivated the productive farms.

Before 1850 the exodus commenced. The Baptist society had its last settled minister in 1869, and a few years later, the church having become nearly extinct, the meeting house was taken down, and the lumber used to build a parsonage for the Baptist church in Sharon village. Four years earlier the Methodists had their last regular appointment from the Conference, though regular preachers were had some portion of the time much later. Many farms tilled forty years ago are wholly abandoned as homesteads, and others are in process of abandonment.

It is impossible to repress a feeling of sadness when one views these desolate and dismantled homes, once the scene of active and prosperous

life. What is to be the future of these desolate places? Will the tide of population sometime flow back and fill these wastes, repeople these hillsides, or will the forests grow up over the hearthstones placed by the forefathers of an earlier generation?

Pompanoosuc, or, in full, Ompompanoosuc, is situated about six miles northeasterly from Norwich village. It has a postoffice and a creamery, and within its limits is the little hamlet of Pattersonville, where L. S. Patterson has a wood working establishment, which is quite an industry—turning out a large product annually. Mr. Patterson also keeps a general country store. Some of the best farms in town are within this territory, and are managed by thrifty and enterprising proprietors.

There are indications that previous to the settlement of the country the mouth of Ompompanoosuc River had been a frequent resort of Indians (probably of the St. Francis tribe) for the purpose of fishing—doubtless to spear salmon at night by torchlight, on the sand bar there,—a practice they were very expert in, and which was perpetuated by the white settlers of the vicinity, at the same locality, as long as salmon continued to ascend the Connecticut River. Indian relics are still occasionally found in the neighborhood. When the Passumpsic railroad was being built through town, several interesting “finds,” we are informed, including Indian arrow heads, ornaments, etc., were dug up by the removal of the surface soil near the railroad station at Pompanoosuc.

New Boston, a small area of territory in the northwestern part of Norwich, received its name as early as 1784—so used in a road survey of that date.

## CHAPTER XVIII

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### INDUSTRIES

Although the products of the industries in Norwich have not been of great magnitude they have been quite varied in character. Such information in regard to these callings as we have been able to obtain we will present to our readers, though not in strict chronological order.

Among the earliest establishments coming under this head was a grist mill established as early as 1770, by Hatch and Babcock on Blood Brook, on or near the site of the grist mill now operated by J. E. Willard, a short distance up the stream from where it empties into the Connecticut River. As has been stated in a previous chapter, it was voted at a proprietors' meeting held September 17, 1770, to give to Joseph Hatch and Oliver Babcock the "tenth river lot on condition they execute a deed \* \* \* \* for upholding a grist mill where said gristmill now stands."

Since the ownership by Hatch and Babcock this property has been in the possession among others of Aaron Storrs, who sold it in 1793 to Doctor Joseph Lewis; Horace Esterbrook, who sold it to J. J. Morse; the latter to G. W. Kibling; Kibling to Crandall and Burbank; they to Doctor Rand of Hartford, Vt., and from the latter's estate, J. E. Willard, the present proprietor, bought it. During Mr. Kibling's ownership of the property he had a department for making doors, window sashes, etc., in addition to a grist mill.

In 1766, Jacob Burton built a saw mill on the north bank of Blood Brook, a little further down the stream than Messenger and Hazen's late tannery (what is now R. E. Cook's mill). The great freshet of September, 1869, carried the mill away. At that time it was owned by George Burton, a great grandson of the original proprietor, and

up to the time of his decease the property had been continuously in possession of that family.

About 1770, Elisha Burton built a grist mill along Blood Brook—a little distance west of Norwich village. The mill is now standing on its original site, and had been occupied by Joseph Amsden, Levi Richards, and, perhaps, others, previous to its ownership by the late Allen W. Knapp, who used it for the purpose for which it was originally built.

About the time the above mentioned mill was built, a saw mill and a grist mill are supposed to have been erected along Ompompanoosuc River, in the territory now known as "Pattersonville" (formerly "Gleason's Flats"). We are informed that the present dam at Patterson's mill occupies the site of the one built to operate the first mills. Mention of the grant of land for "upbuilding" these mills may be found in another chapter in this book.

Johnson Safford and Jacob Burton had a fulling and cloth dressing mill along Blood Brook, in the southwestern part of the village, and operated it until 1836, when they sold the property to Sylvester Morris, who converted it into a tannery. In 1853 Morris sold the property to Asa Blanchard, and he to Wardsworth and Felch in 1856. Wardsworth bought out Felch and sold the property to Messenger and Hazen in 1869, from whom it passed to R. E. Cook, the present owner, who changed it into a grist mill.

Ira Baxter, son of Elihu Baxter, had a tannery north of Norwich village and a short distance south of his dwelling house, on property now owned by Messenger and Hazen. The tannery stood on land, now overgrown with alders, on the easterly side of the highway and a short distance south of the road leading to the site of the old "Center" meeting house.

About 1836, Charles P. Hatch had a tannery on the north bank of Blood Brook, a little below Knapp's mill. Azro Johnson succeeded Hatch and made winnowing mills there. Deacon Sylvester Morris purchased the building and fixtures, some of which he removed to his tannery lower down the brook.

A number of years later, Charles M. Baxter made and repaired furniture in a shop that stood near the south bank of Blood Brook and on the opposite side of the highway from the old Morris tannery, where







KNAPP'S MILL,  
BUILT BY ELISHA BURTON, ABOUT 1769.

he was in business for some years, until his shop was destroyed by fire. Afterwards, Mr. Baxter removed to Woodstock, Vt.; thence to Lebanon, N. H., where he was successfully engaged in manufactures for several years previous to going to Redlands, Cal., his present residence, where he is interested in orange culture. Mr. Baxter was with us "Old Home Day," August 16, 1901, and gave material aid towards the observance of that occasion.

About 1830, Pierce Burton manufactured potash where Nelson Sayers lives—just west of the village cemetery—and in 1817, Waterman Ensworth, father of the present Charles E. Ensworth had a like business where Mrs. Mary Burton's barn stands. The little stream that flows along the northerly base of the cemetery and on by Sayers' garden was known as "Potash Brook." For these facts and for much other aid in compiling this volume, we are indebted to our fellow townsman, C. E. Ensworth, Esq., our walking encyclopedia.

In the early part of the past century Deacon Eleazer T. Raymond made trunks and harnesses in a shop that stood in what is now Mrs. Ruby W. Lewis' garden, where, so we have been told, he made the leather hats worn by the cadets attending the military school here in its early years. The shop was subsequently removed to its present site, where it is the house of Mr. A. B. Nye on Church street.

Deacon Raymond removed to Fremont, Ohio, where he died.

Erastus Leavitt was a harness maker, and his shop was located near where F. W. Hawley's woodshed stands. As Leavitt was a voter in Norwich in 1790, it may be fair to presume that he pursued his trade here at that early date. It is understood that he went to South Carolina and died there. But the old sign that announced his vocation here in Norwich remained in town and showed itself—saddled and bridled—attached to the front of a building in our village during the late Civil War. It is feared that Leavitt was not as mindful of the conduct becoming a church member and a moral citizen as he should have been, for we learn from early church records that he was reported to the church for discipline because of "drunkenness and profanity."

In 1805, Jacob Burton, then the first postmaster in Norwich, kept the office in his harness shop located about opposite the present home of Mrs. William E. Lewis.

The first blacksmith in town of whom we have any knowledge, was Elishu Emerson, who came here from Westfield, Mass., in 1792, followed, three years later, by his two brothers, Joseph and Thomas. Mr. Emerson built a brick shop in what is now the north dooryard of Ed. W. Olds' residence, and there pursued his calling for many years, making axes as well as doing ordinary blacksmithing.

Mr. Emerson was succeeded in blacksmithing by Samuel Currier, who carried on the business for several years in the shop where the former had worked. In 1835, James S. Currier (also a blacksmith and brother of Samuel) moved to town and built a shop just north of and adjoining his brother's shop. After the latter moved onto a farm a little north of Norwich village, James S. took his brother's shop, and worked at his trade there until he retired from business many years afterwards. Several years later the old Emerson shop was taken down, and thus disappeared one of the town's early landmarks.

Joseph Emerson built the house where Henry Lary lives. There he manufactured wool hats for a number of years. Subsequently he had a shop on what is now known as Elm Street, where he was succeeded in business by one Cottle George, whom we have already mentioned. The building is now the residence of Mrs. Emma Hatch. Mr. Emerson built for his residence the house that is now the home of Mrs. Baxter B. Newton.

Among the early painters in Norwich, though not the earliest, probably, were Samuel Nye, who came to an untimely death in Canada in 1844, while visiting there; Morris L. Nichols, who followed this calling for many years previous to his death in town, in 1870, aged seventy-five years; and David Morrill ("Uncle David" as he was familiarly called) who came into town from Strafford, Vt., where he had previously plied his trade. Many of us remember how entertaining it was to visit Uncle David's shop and view some of the products of his brush, notably the band wagon with its prancing steeds, and load of musicians, arrayed in gorgeous uniforms; and to listen to his dissertations on free-masonry.

A firm believer in the mystic order, Mr. Morrill governed his daily life by the square and rule, and passed to his reward some years since, having reached a ripe old age.

There may have been brick-masons in Norwich at an earlier date

than those of whom we have any record, who were: Joseph Cutting, Cyril Pennock, Samuel Sproat and Luman Boutwell.

Cutting, who married a daughter of Reuben Hatch, moved into town in 1808, or earlier, and built the house, on the Plain, where David Stewart lives. Later he removed to Rochester, N. Y. Pennock and Sproat were long-time residents in Norwich, and worked at their trade until declining years forced them to cease work, when the former removed to St. Paul, Minn., where he died several years since, and the latter left his "turnpike" home to be with a daughter with whom he died. His remains were brought to Norwich for burial.

The writer has been told that Pennock was the first cadet of the A. L. S. & M. Academy to sleep in the Academy building and the first to wear the uniform of that institution.

Sproat and Boutwell built, on joint account, at the Plain, the "Seven nation house," so called, that stands on the site of a former dwelling occupied by one Marshall Hodgeman until its destruction by fire, at which time the following incident is said to have occurred:

Judge Aaron Loveland owned a frame building near the fire, and evidently fearing greater injury to his property from the fire hooks that the local firemen were using in tearing down a nearby structure than from the flames, directed the men to cease using those "hellhooks" and use the "squirt gun" (a hand fire-engine that constituted a part of the armament of the fire company)—language truly expressive—perhaps judicial—surely not Chesterfieldian.

That St. Crispin has had many disciples in Norwich the list of boot and shoe makers abundantly proves. Reuben Partridge, son of Elisha Partridge, was the first of the craft, of whom we have any knowledge, to locate in town. His shop was in a building, already noted in this article, in one part of which Erastus Leavitt had a harness shop. As he was married in 1791, we may reasonably suppose that he was in business at that time. Daniel Russell had a shop very near where the creamery building stands at the north end of the village, and he lived on the opposite side of the street, in the house now occupied by C. C. Sawyer. Levi Blood, James Harrison, Eber N. Clark, Cyrus Tracey, and Abel P. Hatch worked, at different times, in a shop that stood until within a comparatively few years about on a line with F. W. Hawley's woodshed—perhaps a little further west. At another time Harrison had



a shop in a small building on his own premises, which were those now occupied by Miss Ellen Hutchinson, on North Main Street. It is believed that this shop was moved to the south side of what is now Church Street, and became the home of Lydia Haskell.

Thomas Brigham, of strongly marked physical characteristics, is recalled by many persons of the present day. He followed his calling of boot and shoe making in the second story front of what is now Ed. W. Olds' residence. He was proverbial for promising many more pairs of boots to be completed by the next Saturday night than it was possible for the most industrious craftsman to accomplish.

George Clark worked in a shop that stood where Egbert Blaisdell's barn is. There he performed his six days' labor, and rested on the seventh by playing the bass viol in the choir of the Congregational church in the village.

Later, about 1856, Abel P. Hatch had his shop where Henry Lary lives (a building that has sheltered more mercantile ventures, workshops and postoffices than any other structure in town). Subsequently, Hatch built a shop on Mechanics Street, where Hazen Batchelder's house stands, where he worked at his trade until fire destroyed the building. Another shop was erected on that spot, and there Hatch worked until failing health compelled him to cease labor. Mr. Hatch had a remarkably retentive memory and his mind was well stored with events in the town's history, and to him many people went for information on various matters.

A steam sawmill was erected by George A. Ames on the west bank of the Connecticut river, a little south of and across the highway from the home of the late Deacon Henry Hutchinson. Soon after, a box-making department was attached to the mill. The property was destroyed by fire, but was rebuilt and operated as a sawmill only. F. G. Ames, a son of George A., is the present proprietor of the industry.

In 1889, S. M. Morrison took possession of the Hatch shop, and worked at his trade of shoe and harness making until flames again visited that spot. In 1893, Morrison built the "Klondike Building" on Main Street, where he has worked at his trade until the present time, and is now the only person, actively engaged, of the many who have pounded the lapstone in our village.



In 1888, the "Norwich Creamery" was established at the north end of Norwich village, occupying a building previously used as a school-house. It was operated with apparent success for a number of years. A few years since the building was partially destroyed by fire, but was rebuilt and the business continued under different managements until the spring of 1904, when the property was sold to Hood & Co., who for several years have had a factory of a like character near the railroad and a short distance south of the Norwich and Hanover station.

## CHAPTER XIX

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### NORWICH MERCHANTS

Peter Olcott had a store near his residence at the Center, in the time of the Revolutionary War. Abel Curtis was for a time associated with him in this business. Stephen Burton, eldest son of Elisha Burton and a graduate of Dartmouth College in 1790, was probably the first to open trade at Norwich Plain, prior to the year 1800. Ichabod Marshall of Hanover, also a Dartmouth graduate in 1790, is understood as having been engaged in mercantile business in Norwich (possibly in partnership with Stephen Burton) for several years. Both these young men emigrated to the West early in the century, Burton to central New York where he died in 1812, and Marshall to Ohio in the year 1818. George Woodward kept store before 1799 in the building now occupied by Mrs. Gardner Davis as a dwelling.

Oliver Hatch was in trade on the corner where F. W. Hawley is in business. In 1801 or 1802, he was succeeded by William Little, who came from Strafford and bought the store building and prosecuted business there till about 1816, part of the time in company with Jona. Lovejoy from Boston. They dissolved partnership in 1809. About this time a store was kept by Charles Hutchins from Concord, N. H., in the building that in later years became the residence of the late Jas. S. Currier, just north of "Newton Inn." Little and Lovejoy were succeeded by Waterman Ensworth and Rufus Hatch, Cyrus Partridge, not long after, becoming a member in place of Mr. Hatch.

Capt. Ethen Burnap was a merchant in Norwich from about 1817 to 1828 or '29, first at Union Village and later at Norwich Plain. About this time Elias Lyman, Jr., came in possession of the corner store at the

Plain, where he did an extensive trade for several years, covering the period (1824-1834) pretty nearly, perhaps.

Following Elias Lyman was George Lyman, with whom Mr. Franklin L. Olds was associated, first as clerk and afterwards as partner, the firm finally becoming Lyman, Olds and Burton (Harvey Burton). Contemporary with this latter firm was Baxter B. Newton (1841-1845), his place of business being in the building where Henry Lary now lives. During the decade immediately preceding 1842, William Smith Burton was engaged in trade in the building now the residence of Edward W. Olds. L. S. Booth took a hand at merchandising (1847-1859), part of the time in company with John L. Currier, who continued the business alone for two or three years.

A Union store ("N. E. P. U., No. 236") was established at Norwich Village about 1853, in the house where Mr. Harry Russ resides, with E. M. Lewis as agent for several years; then the place of business was changed to where Henry Lary lives, with J. S. Gordon as agent, who was succeeded by Harry Russ. After a short existence, the enterprise went the way of nearly all co-operative ventures.

In the year 1842 the mercantile firm of F. L. and E. W. Olds was formed, and maintained until 1874. The business was continued by Edward W. Olds at the old corner store until its destruction by fire on the night of the 4th of August, 1875; after that date, in the brick store built by John Wright, Esq., about 1828, until that was destroyed by fire December 29, 1899; since then in the new building on the site of the one last destroyed, where Mr. Olds is still waiting upon customers and serving the United States and our townspeople as postmaster.

In the summer of 1886, a handsome and commodious building was erected by Josiah T. Morrison and Fred W. Hawley on the site of the old corner store. This partnership was continued until 1889, when Mr. Hawley assumed the whole business and is still in trade there.

Edward M. Lewis sold more or less groceries since 1857, having his place of business during the first few years at the village and since then at his home near the railroad station. Harry Russ and Myron D. Gibbs were similarly employed at the village, 1866-1874. Beginning in 1868, J. G. Stimson dealt largely in flour and feed, but relinquished the business to his son, Charles, who keeps his goods in a building in the rear of his residence on Main Street.

In 1891, L. K. Merrill moved to town and opened a general store in the south end of the Barstow block, where he remained in business until 1895, when he disposed of his stock of goods to Merrill and Smith, who have continued the business ever since.

In the '40's, S. & H. Moore kept store at Beaver Meadow. H. & E. Morgan were in trade there from 1841 to 1858. About 1854 a union store was established there.

## CHAPTER XX

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### CEMETERIES

In the graveyard at Pompanoosuc, which was the earliest one established in town, are the graves of two infant sons (twins) of Deacon John Slafter, that died in May, 1770. These were the earliest graves noticed. In this yard are the graves of many of the early settlers in the north part of the town, among them those of the Waterman, Bartlett, Baldwin, Burnap, Slafter, Smalley, Goodrich, Hedges, Hezekiah Johnson, Lyman, Lord, Brownson, Jaquith, Carey, and Root families.

At the Center graveyard, near the site of the old meeting house, also may be found many graves of early date, including those of the Olcott, Murdock (except Hon. Thomas M.), Armstrong, Hutchinson (in part), Johnson, Newton, Hovey, Vinsen, Loveland (in part), and Yarrington families, and Rev. Samuel Goddard, and Zerah Colburn, the mathematical prodigy.

In the old cemetery at the village are many early graves (one of date of 1770, probably of Jonathan Marsh, who died that year). Here lie the remains of the Brigham, Brown, Bigelow, Boardman, Curtis, Coit, Emerson, Hatch, Hopson, Lewis, Partridge, and part of the Hutchinson and Loveland families, and many others. This cemetery is the last resting place of a large proportion of the men most prominent in the history of the town,—of Jacob, Elisha, Pierce, and Harvey Burton, of John, Joseph, and Reuben Hatch, of Samuel, Alden, and Cyrus Partridge, of Lieut-Gov. Paul Brigham and his family, of Dr. Joseph Lewis and Enos Lewis, of Hon. Abel Curtis, Hon. Thomas Murdock, Hon. Ebenezer Brown, Col. Truman B. Ransom, John Wright, Esq., Rev. J. W. Woodward, Col. William E. Lewis, and others.

The cemetery on the hill west of the village—the latest public burial place established in town—was a gift from the late Hon. Aaron Loveland, whose remains are interred therein.



In the west part of the town is a plot of ground near where a pest-house once stood, where were buried the victims of the smallpox, which was epidemic in town about 1799. This lot of land is said to be the property of the town and was probably intended to be used solely for the interment of persons who died from that disease.

## CHAPTER XXI

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### EPIDEMICS IN NORWICH

It is probable that smallpox prevailed in town in 1797, for we learn by the records of a town meeting held that year that it was "voted to provide for inoculation for the smallpox, to be carried on under the selectmen and a committee appointed for that purpose." At that time a pest house\* was established, and rigid regulations adopted for stamping out the scourge by a committee consisting of Paul Brigham, Joseph Hatch, and Dr. Joseph Lewis. At a town meeting held in January, 1803, it was "voted to give liberty to have the smallpox introduced into town by inoculation, for two months only, to be carried out under the superintendence of a committee in certain houses to be described as pest houses."

During the winter of 1811-12, the spotted fever prevailed and claimed many victims. In 1798, dysentery was present in epidemic form. In 1823, the number of deaths was forty-six, the cause not known. Between March and November, 1832, thirteen children under eight years of age died of canker rash. During 1834-5, there were sixty-four deaths. What the prevailing disease was, we know not. In 1843, there were fifty-three deaths in town, eight in January and nine in February and March, over twenty being attributed to erysipelas. Ten of the deaths this year were of persons over eighty years old, average age eighty-four years. The deaths in 1842 numbered fifty-four, about one-half being children, mostly under five years of age, of canker rash. Seven persons over eighty years of age died in 1844.

The following curious causes of deaths in town are copied from records: "May 31, 1827, Polly Lord, inflammation—Thomsonian doctrine; September 1, 1829, Joseph Yates Spooner, 36 years, suddenly, by green corn; September 24, 1830, Jacob Sawyer, 76 years,

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\*The pest house was on land subsequently included in the farm of the late Gardner Davis, in Beaver Meadow. Near the site of the pest house are graves of several persons who died of smallpox.

suddenly in the field; January 3, 1833, James Johnson, 73 years, intemperance, bowel complaint; January 29, 1835, Widow Geer, 90 years (old age), had been blind twenty years; August 12, 1835, Miss Joiner, suddenly, from eating fruit; June 11, 1829, Widow Evans, 75 years, supposed to have been poisoned by a spider in some lettuce; August 28, 1806, Ames, 23 years, suicide; May 5, 1807, Hiram Baxter, 7 years, lived one day after excess of drinking; October 25, 1825, James Ellis, 45 years, hung himself; 1827, Samuel Gleason, drowned; January 2, 1834, Captain Safford, 78 years, frozen; April 22, 1835, Jeremiah Bissell, suicide; June 1, 1839, Ann Hatch, 32 years, suicide by drowning; March, 1843, Calvin Freeman, 70 years, intemperate, layed out; November 7, 1841, Mrs. Sweeney, murdered by her husband, James Sweeney."

## CHAPTER XXII

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### AGRICULTURE IN NORWICH

By favor of Hon. George W. Richards, Acting Superintendent of the Census Office at Washington, the statistics of agriculture of the census of 1880 for the town of Norwich have been compiled for our use. These statistics have never before been published. In the following list we have compared them with those of 1840, so far as the latter were collected in the census of that year :

#### PRODUCTS OF THE FARM

	1880	1840
Horses, Number of,	*423	481
Cattle, Number of—Working Oxen, 197,		
Milch Cows, 700,		
Other Cattle, 589,	1,486	2,348
Sheep, Number of,	†9,847	13,395
Wool, pounds raised,	37,388	27,639
Wool, fleeces, spring clip of 1880,	7,124	
Swine,	409	1,559
Poultry,	3,859	
Eggs, dozens (produced in 1879),	17,070	
Hay, tons,	6,032	5,265
Acres of ground mown,	6,000	
Wheat, bushels,	2,233	3,801
Indian Corn, bushels,	20,791	11,119
Rye, bushels,	418	2,854
Oats, bushels,	21,541	20,727
Barley, bushels,	71	349
Buckwheat, bushels,	741	11,182

\*In *Thompson's Gazetteer* of Vermont, edition of 1824, the number of horses in town in 1823 is given as 361, and the number of cattle as 2,159.

†Exclusive of spring lambs.

Potatoes, bushels,	21,946	53,480
Maple Sugar, pounds,	53,185	15,730
Maple Molasses, gallons, . .	413	
Honey, pounds,	1,980	
Beans, bushels,	1,212	
Peas, bushels,	16	
Apples, bushels,	20,855	
Butter, pounds (produced in 1879),	73,432	
Cheese, pounds (produced in 1879),	13,927	
Milk, gallons (sold in 1879),	4,993	
Wood, cords (cut in 1879),	3,842	
Number of farms in town	of over three acres,	228
Number of farms cultivated by owners,	“	209
Number of farms rented for fixed money rental,	“	5
Number of farms rented for share of products,	“	14
Land in farms, acres improved,	22,342	
Land in farms, acres unimproved,	5,425	
Total value of farm products in 1879,	\$105,420	
Total value of forest products in 1879,	\$13,360	
Total value of orchard products in 1879,	\$5,082	
Total value of market garden products in 1879,	\$880	

While a few branches of husbandry show a notable increase in the aggregate of products in the last forty years, others have fallen off. Probably the average of arable land is now considerably less than in 1840. The yield of hay appears to be fully maintained, and shows a product of a trifle over one ton for each acre mown—not a very flattering exhibit to be sure.

A decided improvement in the grade of sheep appears in the fact that, while the number of animals kept is more than one-fourth smaller than in 1840, the weight of wool shorn has increased over one-third, and averages about five and one-fourth pounds to each fleece.

The incompleteness of the census of 1840 makes it of comparatively little value for purposes of comparison with the much fuller schedules of 1880. The absence of comparative dairy statistics is especially to be regretted.

The culture of the strawberry for market is a new industry that has reached considerable magnitude in town in recent years, the product



being estimated in 1884 to reach fully one thousand bushels of fruit, of a market value of about \$3,000,—an item that seems to have been overlooked in the census report of 1880.

The process of ensilaging green fodder received early attention here, Mr. Thomas A. Hazen being the first to employ it on a large scale. Several leading farmers have since built silos for themselves, from the use of which they claim to have realized a decided benefit.

## CHAPTER XXIII

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### FREE MASONRY

It does not appear that any Masonic Lodge has ever existed in Norwich. Quite a number of our citizens, however, as might be expected, have at different times belonged to lodges in adjacent towns. In the list of members of Franklin Lodge, established at Hanover, N. H., in 1796, we find the names of the following Norwich men, with the year of their admission: Reuben Hatch, Freegrace Leavitt (1798), William Sumner (1799), Thomas Brigham, Erastus Leavitt, and Moses Hayward (1800), Reuben Partridge, Andrew Dewey, William Little, Levi Richards, Aaron West (1801-1807), Lyman Lewis, Elijah Slafter, Simon Baldwin, Enos Lewis, Jasper Johnson, Noah Lewis (1808), Charles Hutchins, Sewell Gleason (1809), Ephraim Hall, George Olds, Jr., and Pierce Burton (1810), Manly G. Woodbury, Silas Morse, Ammi B. Allen, and Barzilla Bush, Jr. (1813-1820). The roll probably bears other Norwich names that we do not now recognize. The Franklin Lodge was moved to Lebanon in 1821, where it still flourishes. In 1807 and 1808, Doctor Thomas Brigham of Norwich was master of the lodge, who, on his sudden departure from town and abandonment of his family, was promptly expelled therefrom by notice published in the *Vermont Journal* at Windsor, in April, 1809, "for immoral conduct unworthy a Mason and a gentleman."

Other Norwich Masons of that time, not of the Franklin Lodge, were Captain Calvin Seaver, Jeremiah Bissell, Ebenezer Spear, 2nd, Lyman Baldwin, and William Leconte.

At the height of the Anti-Masonic agitation, about 1830, a great commotion was raised in the North Congregational Church, growing out of the refusal of the majority of the church, led by Deacon Israel Newton, to go to communion with those church members who were

Masons. Manifestoes and resolutions were presented in church meetings on both sides, and a heated controversy raged through several months upon this question, eliciting much bitterness of feeling. A settlement was finally effected by mutual concessions, the Anti-Masonic party agreeing to cease their attacks upon the institution before the church, and the Masons agreeing to absent themselves from the meetings of the lodge, at least for a time.

## CHAPTER XXIV

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### DISTINGUISHED VISITORS IN NORWICH

The convening of the legislature at Norwich in June, 1785, has been noticed, as well as the meeting of the first Council of Census here. In later years, prominent citizens and public officials have on several occasions visited the town. Norwich was the first town in Vermont to welcome to its hospitalities a Chief Executive of the United States. President James Munroe, in his trip through New England in the summer of 1817, entered the state at Norwich on the 22nd of July.\* After a drive to Copperas Hill, the presidential party returned by way of Strafford to Norwich Plain, and alighted at Curtis' Hotel,† where a number of citizens were in attendance, who presented to Mr. Munroe the following appropriate and patriotic

#### ADDRESS

*To the President of the United States:*

SIR:—A few citizens of Vermont upon your first entrance on the borders of the state present you a united and hearty welcome.

With the liveliest emotions of duty we meet for the first time, a Chief Magistrate of the Union within our territory. An emulation to pay respectful attention to the ruler of our nation, appointed by our own choice, under a constitution so eminently calculated for individual security, for individual interests and national happiness; a spontaneous burst of joy among all classes of our citizens, at the visit of the President of the United States, are the best pledges a free

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\*Mr. Monroe came into town directly from Hanover where (so the journal of his trip relates) he unexpectedly met an old acquaintance in the widow of President John Wheelock, then recently deceased. This lady was a native of New Jersey, and was at Trenton at the time of the battle there in 1777, in which young Monroe was engaged as lieutenant of a company and was wounded. She was the person who dressed his wound after he had been conveyed to the house where she then was. *Sanborn's History of New Hampshire*, p. 266.

†Curtis Hotel occupied the site of the present "Newton Inn," and was kept by Eleazer Curtis.

people can present to a Chief Magistrate of their contentment with the laws, and the operation of them in the government under the constitution, and their confidence in the administration. This emulation, joy, and confidence we tender you, Sir; and in Vermont, it is believed, you will find everywhere these sentiments, as you have before this, on your present tour, experienced them in other sections of the Union.

These testimonials we present you, Sir, in behalf of our fellow citizens.\*

To which the President was pleased to return a verbal answer.

The President and his suite, with a number of other gentlemen, then partook of a dinner, prepared by Mr. Eleazer Curtis in handsome style. After dinner the President was introduced to a number of ladies, collected, while the company were dining, for the purpose of seeing him. He was also introduced to a large number of the children of the neighborhood. The company, men, women, and children, were highly gratified at the sight and introduction of the President. He stayed in the place about two hours, and then bade the company an affectionate farewell, and left Norwich for Windsor.

Ex-Vice-President Richard M. Johnson visited Norwich, October 25, 1843, and had a public reception here. He was greeted with military honors, under the direction of General T. B. Ransom, on his approach to the village from Hanover, where he had been entertained the day before. John Wright, Esq., made an address of welcome (hereto appended), to which Colonel Johnson responded. The ceremonies of the occasion were concluded by a review of the corps of cadets by the distinguished guest, and by a barbecue on the parade ground of Norwich University in the evening, accompanied by festivities of a varied and unusual character.

COLONEL RICHARD M. JOHNSON :

SIR:—In the name and in behalf of the citizens of Norwich, I am delegated to tender to you a sincere welcome to our small but delightful village.

It is, Sir, with great diffidence that I attempt to express to you the enthusiastic feelings of gratitude, and friendship, which pervade the bosoms of this assembled multitude.

You find yourself, Sir, in the midst of a people the great mass of whom are engaged in the laudable and honorable pursuit of agriculture, owning as well as cultivating with their own hands these broad and fertile fields, and although our avocations are of the rustic kind, and we have not probed deep in "Classic Lore,"

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\*The name of the person who acted as spokesman on this occasion in behalf of his townsmen has not been ascertained, but is believed to have been Ebenezer Brown, Esq.



still I hazard nothing in saying you will find us as generous, and as warm-hearted possessed of as much philanthropy, as strongly attached to our country, her constitution, and laws, as any portion of the population of this mighty Republic.

With these feelings throbbing in the heart of every individual in this assembly, they have left their farms, their work shops, and their cares, and come up here this day to welcome among them *one*, who has done so much for the benefit and honor of our beloved country.

Sir, your untiring efforts while in the council of the Nation to ameliorate the condition of the poor and unfortunate debtor, your zealous and successful exertions to restore to the war-worn soldier of the Revolution a small part of his hard earnings, your bold and fortunate course to allay the animosity of angry politicians upon subjects of legislation touching the conscience of man (which is between him and his God); I must be allowed to say to you, Sir, these acts of yours alone, would have been sufficient to have endeared you to every honest, independent freeman of America. But, Sir, I stop not here. In the early part of the late war, urged upon us by the aggression of Great Britain, you took an active part, and drew your sword in defence of your injured and insulted country with a determination never to sheath it until that haughty nation and her red allies should be driven from the continent or forced to submit to an honorable peace.

In the ever memorable year 1813, when our country was bleeding at every pore, our western and northwestern frontier almost deluged with the blood of helpless women and innocent children wantonly massacred by the barbarous savage, instigated to the horrid act by the bribery of British gold; at this eventful period we find you, Sir, fast hastening to the scene of danger with a host of Kentucky's noblest sons.

The western breeze soon wafted to our ears the joyful news that the enemy was driven from our soil, and Proctor and Tecumseh were retreating to the interior of the British dominions for safety, closely pursued by the mounted riflemen of Kentucky, under their gallant and invincible leader and commander, R. M. Johnson (our distinguished guest). With breathless anxiety we waited to hear the result. The glorious news soon came that General Proctor's army was captured, Tecumseh slain, and Proctor had saved himself by flight.

History has furnished us the facts, how and by whom this great achievement was obtained. We learn from this that you, Sir, acted a most conspicuous part. Your chivalrous deeds on the plains of Moravian Town have made an indelible impression on our minds which time cannot eradicate. The faithful pen of history has and will record your noble deeds of valor, and of patriotism.

Your name, Sir, the name of R. M. Johnson, is associated with the imperishable names of Harrison and Shelby, and millions yet unborn will read with admiration your political acts, and martial exploits.

Sir, with pride and pleasure we shall often recur to this day, when we had the honor and satisfaction of seeing and hearing from one who had so often jeopardised his life in defence of our country's rights.

It is with deep regret we learn your visit with us must be so short, but, Sir, should you return to the rich valleys and green hills of your much loved Kentucky

to enjoy in quiet retirement the remainder of your days, or should you again be called by the voice of your fellow citizens into the service of your country, be assured, Sir, our morning orisons will be fervently offered up for your health, happiness, and the full enjoyments of all the blessings of life.

Accept then, Sir, in the sincere spirit in which it is offered, this simple tribute to your exalted virtues.

Again, Sir, not only the citizens of Norwich, but the thousands of "Green Mountain Boys" now around us, the descendants of those who fought at Bennington and Saratoga, with this throng of the hardy yeomanry of New Hampshire, sons of those noble sires who, under the immortal Stark, vanquished the legions of Britain on the hills of Willoomscoik, join in bidding you welcome, a thrice hearty welcome, among us.

President U. S. Grant and President R. B. Hayes each passed through the town during their respective terms of office, the former, August 27, 1869, the latter in 1877, on the 20th of the same month. On each occasion the cars were detained a few moments at the railroad station, to give the people an opportunity to see and be introduced to these high officials and honored citizens of the republic.

The route of General Lafayette in his rapid passage through Vermont in 1825 did not enter Norwich, but proceeded up White River from Windsor and Woodstock to Royalton, and from thence to Montpelier and Burlington. Much attention and honor were everywhere paid to the illustrious Frenchman, and there was a general turnout of the people, and especially of the old Revolutionary veterans, to greet this early friend of American liberty. Among other benefactions conferred by Lafayette upon his former companions in arms during his visit to the United States was the liberation of General William Burton from imprisonment in the jail of Caledonia County, by the payment of a debt of considerable amount, on account of which he had suffered confinement for a period of fourteen years.\*

Earlier in time than either of the visits above mentioned, in one of the first years of the century, another illustrious foreigner passed

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\*It is not generally remembered that an expedition for the invasion of Canada was planned by the Continental Congress in the early spring of 1778, the command of which was given to Lafayette, then freshly arrived in this country from France. The raising of troops was begun in the upper valley of the Connecticut (including Norwich) to participate in the expedition, and Lafayette came on to Albany, and to Bennington, probably, to superintend the organization of forces for the contemplated invasion. But the campaign was suddenly abandoned, for military reasons, before preparations were complete for action.

through Vermont while making the tour of the United States and Canada. This was none other than Thomas Moore, the poet, justly famous for his "Irish Melodies," wherever the English language is spoken, and for the tender sweetness of his lyric verse. What portions of the state he visited is not now with certainty known, nor how long he tarried therein, but that he was charmed by the picturesque beauty of the natural scenery, and by the Arcadian peace and happiness of our people, is attested by an exquisite little ballad composed while he was traveling through the state. Happy the people whose outward life was thus portrayed! We have room only for the first stanza:—

"I knew by the smoke that so gracefully curled  
Above the green elms, that a cottage was near,  
And I thought, 'If there's peace to be found in the world,  
A heart that is humble might hope for it here.'"

## PART II

# BIOGRAPHICAL

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Part II contains brief biographical sketches of such early families of Norwich as the authors of this volume were able to obtain.

1871

1871

1871



## BAXTER FAMILY

The Baxters of this town came here from Norwich, Connecticut, a town which their ancestors with others from Norwich, England, assisted in founding about the year 1632.

Elihu Baxter, with his young wife, Tryphena Taylor, to whom he was married October 24, 1777, arrived in Norwich the same year, and here fifteen children (six daughters and nine sons) were born to them, twelve of whom lived to grow up and have families of their own. Mr. Baxter settled on the farm that subsequently became the home of Hon. Paul Brigham. He later removed to the farm where Orson Sargent lives, and there built himself a frame house, a part of which is now in use by the present owner of the property.

Of his children, William, the eldest, born August 3, 1778, studied law with Hon. Daniel A. Buck of Norwich, and removed to Bennington, Vt., where he soon became the leading lawyer in that part of the state, and received many honors from his town and county. He married Lydia Ashley of Norwich, August 17, 1779, and died at Bennington October 1, 1826, aged forty nine years.

Hiram settled in Bennington a little after 1800.

Elihu, Jr., the third child, born in 1781, died at Portland, Me., in 1863, where he had been in the practice of medicine for many years.

Chester, born in 1785, died at Sharon, Vt., in 1863. He married Hannah Root and they had one daughter who married ——— Deane.

James, the sixth son, born in 1788, established himself at Stanstead, L. C., in 1817, where he became very prominent in public affairs; was a member of the Provincial Parliament in 1829—first member from Stanstead County—and held other offices of honor.

Erastus, born in 1787, married Lucy Freeman, and of their nine children eight were born in Norwich. He removed late in life to the state of New York and died at Gorham, that state.

Ira, the second son and child, married Arsena Sprague of Hartford, Vt., in 1802, and to them were born nine children, of whom Laura, the

eldest daughter, born in 1803, married Henry S. Burton. She died in 1862, followed by her husband in 1883, in the ninety-first year of his age. Marshall D., born in 1813, died at Lyme, N. H., 1876, to which place he removed after having passed many years of his life in his native town. He married Esther, a daughter of Rev. Samuel Goddard of Norwich, Nov. 1, 1838. Arabella, the second daughter, born in 1807, married Samuel Little in 1825. She died in 1849, and Mr. Little in 1870 (both in Norwich), the latter aged seventy years. Harriet, born in 1823, was their youngest child. She died in Norwich, August 25, 1854, the wife of Lewis S. Partridge, to whom she was married June 16, 1846. Ira Baxter settled on the farm where his son-in-law Burton lived at a later date (now owned by Messenger and Hazen) and there built his tannery, already mentioned.

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### THE BLAISDELL FAMILY

Michael Blaisdell, the progenitor of the family in Norwich, came from Plainfield, N. H., in the year 1813, and settled on the farm where Henry S. Goddard now lives. His sons were Jonathan, Levi, Stephen, and Thomas.

Of these Levi and Stephen spent their lives in town and reared large families.

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### BOARDMAN FAMILY

Samuel Borman emigrated from Devonshire or Somersetshire, England, in 1639, and settled in Wethersfield, Conn., in 1641, where he died in 1673. His name is identified with many official positions in the early history of the Colony.

The following is a copy of an original letter to Samuel Borman from his mother, carefully preserved by Wm. Boardman of Wethersfield, Conn., one of her seventh generation :

“OBRYDON, the 5th of February, 1641.

“Good Sonne—I have receaved your letter; whereby I understand you are in good health, for which I give God thanks, as we are all—

Praised be God for the same. Whereas you desire to see your brother Christopher with you, he is not ready for so great a journey, nor do I think he dare take upon him so dangerous voige. Your five sisters are all alive and in good health and remember their love to you. Your father hath been dead almost this two years—and this troubling you no farther at this time I rest praying to God to bless you and your wife unto whom we all kindly remember our loves.

“Your ever loving mother,

“JULIAN BORMAN.”

The names “Borman” and “Boreman” appear on the Wethersfield records until 1712; afterwards it appears as “Bordman,” and later on as “Boardman.”

Capt. Nathaniel Boardman, great-grandson of Samuel Borman who settled in Wethersfield, Conn., in 1641, was born there in 1734; was captain of a militia company during the French and Indian war; in 1758 married Esther Carver, a lineal descendant of Governor Carver of Plymouth Colony; in 1775 removed from Bolton, Conn., to Norwich, Vt., with his wife and eight children, the eldest fifteen and the youngest one year old, the entire journey being made on horseback. Captain Boardman died at Norwich in 1814, aged eighty-one years. His wife, Esther, died in 1833, aged ninety-seven years.

Doctor Nathaniel Boardman, eldest son of Captain Boardman, was born in Connecticut, 1759; came to Norwich in 1775; married Philomela Huntington, whose father was cousin to Samuel Huntington, first President of Congress; died 1842, aged eighty-four years. His eldest son, Rev. Elderkin J., graduated at Dartmouth about 1815, also at Andover; Congregational minister for many years in Vermont; removed to Iowa in 1858, where his son, Hon. Henry E. J. Boardman, a prominent and wealthy citizen, now resides. Another son of Doctor Boardman's, who died in Norwich in 1867, was the last in the line of five “Nathaniels,” father and son, extending back to Hon. Samuel Borman.

Halsey J. Boardman, son of the fifth Nathaniel, was born in Norwich in 1834; graduated at Dartmouth College in 1858; removed to Boston in 1859; commissioner of Board of Enrolment for the fourth Massachusetts district during the War of the Rebellion; member of the Bos-

ton Common Council in 1873, '74 and '75, and president of that body in 1875; Republican candidate for mayor in 1876, being defeated by a vote of 14,000 to 12,000 by the citizens' candidate; was elected a member of the Massachusetts Legislature for 1883, '84 and '85.

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### EBENEZER BROWN

His parents, birth, and birthplace are not known. He graduated from Dartmouth College in 1778. He studied for the ministry and preached for a time in Bethel, Vt., but was never ordained. He soon settled in Norwich as a farmer on a farm on Christian St., lately occupied by Roswell Tenney, where he died May 10, 1830, aged 80 years. He was familiarly known in Norwich as "Deacon Brown." He married Patience, daughter of Samuel Bell of Norwich.

Ebenezer Brown, son of Shubael and Edith (Bradford) Brown, came to Norwich at an early age from Canterbury, Conn. He graduated from Dartmouth College, 1787; studied law with Hon. Daniel Buck, and opened the first law office on Norwich Plain, and there practiced his profession till his death, September 25, 1822. He was assistant judge of Windsor County Court in 1814 and chief judge of the court in 1815. He married (1) Anna, daughter of Hon. Thomas Murdock, January 13, 1793, and (2) Mary, daughter of Rev. Josiah Dana of Barre, Mass., January 12, 1814. He was brother of John Brown, many years first constable of Norwich and otherwise prominent in town affairs.

Mr. Brown's first wife was mother of the late Miss Julia Brown, and his second wife mother of the late Mrs. Mary Godfrey, both of Norwich.

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### JACOB BURTON

It is quite impossible to indulge in even a brief review of Mr. Burton's advent into Norwich from Preston, Conn., without repeating something of what is said of him in other places in this volume,

Mr. Burton came to Norwich, to reside, in the latter part of 1765, bringing with him his sons, Elisha, John, Josiah, Isaac, and Asa, and his eldest daughter, Anna, who, soon after, married Simeon Carpenter. For some time she was the only young lady in town.

Before locating in town, Mr. Burton had purchased two one hundred acre lots of land, which embraced the greater part of the present Norwich village, and built his dwelling-house (the first one erected in town) on the southern and eastern part of his purchase, and tradition has it that it was built directly over a large pine stump, which protruded through the floor, and its top having been smoothed off and recesses made in its sides for cupboards, it was used as the family table.

Elisha, one of the sons, built the house where Samuel A. Armstrong resides, and John, another son, built the house now the home of Thos. A. Hazen.

Mr. Burton's political record is given under its appropriate head in another part of the book.

Of Mr. Burton it may be said that he was literally and truly one of the fathers of the town.

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### REVEREND DOCTOR ASA BURTON

Was born at Stonington, Conn., August 25, 1752, and was the sixth of the thirteen children of Jacob Burton. His parents removed to Preston, Conn., when he was about one year old. Here his childhood was mostly spent under the ministry of Reverend Doctor Levi Hart. In his fourteenth year his father removed to Norwich. From that time till he was twenty years of age, his work was "to fell trees, cut them into logs, and then by hand roll them with levers into heaps to burn them, and help carry logs to make into log fences, as they had no oxen for two or three years."

By these severe labors his health was much impaired, and he resolved, if possible, to get an education. This his father opposed but his mother favored.

Two months after he was twenty years of age, he began the study



of Latin and on his twenty-first birthday he was admitted to Dartmouth College.

The same autumn (1772) a malignant fever entered his father's family and his mother, a brother, and two sisters died within a few weeks. His father was so much embarrassed by the expenses of this sickness and the death of his son, whose assistance he had greatly depended on, that he thought it necessary to remove Asa from college, and visited the president of the college for the purpose of procuring his dismissal. After a long interview the president persuaded the father to allow him to continue his studies, which the son was only too happy to do.

He was a hard student in College. He says of himself: "I pursued my studies with greediness through a college course. I was always inclined to go, as we say, to the bottom of everything. Though I knew not what was meant by *first principles* in a science, yet I now see that it was my desire to trace everything back to first principles."

At college he excelled in mental and moral philosophy, and especially in English composition.

After graduation he spent a few months in the study of theology with Doctor Hart of Preston, Conn., and preached occasionally in various towns in Vermont and Connecticut until January, 1779, when he was settled over the church in Thetford, Vt., where he spent the remainder of his life.

His success here was marked in building up from what he regarded as very unpromising material, a large and flourishing church. At the time of his ordination the church numbered only sixteen members, and when he preached his half century sermon in 1859, four hundred and ninety members had been added and three hundred and twenty were still members.

His "Essays," published in 1824, had a slow sale and their publication proved a pecuniary loss to him.

He began taking students in divinity into his family in 1796, and continued doing so until 1816. During this period he had constantly from two to four students under his charge. About sixty young men were prepared for the ministry under his instruction, many of whom became able and successful ministers.

Doctor Burton was no bookworm, but a man of original and inde-

pendent thought. His library was of modest dimensions. He did not seek to cram the minds of his students with theologic lore, but rather teach them to think and reason for themselves.

The first sermon preached by Doctor Burton was at Norwich, on the subject, "Justification by Faith."

He died at Thetford, Vt., May 1, 1836.

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### HONORABLE DANIEL BUCK

Daniel Buck came to Norwich in 1784 or '85, and opened the first lawyer's office in town—on the hill near the old center meeting house, then just being completed—and there continued to live and transact business for twenty-five years, or until he removed to Chelsea in 1809. Norwich then contained probably about one thousand inhabitants, but no village, there being at that time not over three or four dwellings where Norwich village now stands.

But little is known of Mr. Buck previous to his coming to Norwich. He was born at Hebron, Conn., November 9, 1753, and was the second son and child of Thomas and Jane Buck of that town. He had been a soldier in the Revolution, and had lost an arm at the battle of Bennington. He had also lived some time in Thetford, which was settled largely by people from Hebron, and perhaps also in Hanover, N. H. He acted as secretary to the council in June, 1785, when the Vermont legislature assembled at Norwich, having been assistant secretary of the same body during their session at Rutland the preceding October. He seems to have been a householder at Norwich at this time, as by a resolution of the council on June 17, the treasurer of the State was directed "to pay Daniel Buck twenty shillings hard money for the use of his house, etc."

For several years the young attorney does not appear to have made much headway in his profession, the townspeople sharing in the ancient dislike to lawyers so prevalent in the early days of New England. The town records show that he was willing to make himself useful at this period by accepting such offices as highway surveyor and key keeper of the town pound. But he grew steadily in the confidence of his townsmen, and was soon in possession of a lucrative

practice. His first important public service was to represent the town in the convention that met at Bennington in January, 1791, to adopt the constitution of the United States preliminary to the admission of Vermont into the Federal Union. Here Mr. Buck appears as the champion and principal spokesman of that portion of the convention—a decided minority—who believed it to be inexpedient, for the present at least, for Vermont to enter into a union with the original thirteen states. The arguments of this party appear, at this distance of time, rather puerile and provincial, it must be confessed, though their objections to union from the size of the country and diversity of interests were not without some weight. Mr. Buck, however, with most of the other objectors, finally voted in favor of immediate union, which was carried in the convention after several days' discussion, by nearly a unanimous vote.\*

In 1793 and '94, the town sent Mr. Buck to the legislature, and he was each year chosen speaker of the house. In 1794, he was elected to represent the eastern district of Vermont in the fourth Congress of the United States, which assembled at Philadelphia December 7, 1795. In this position he succeeded Nathaniel Niles of Fairlee, who had held the place two terms, or since the admission of the State into the Union. Mr. Buck served but one term in Congress, being himself succeeded by Lewis R. Morris of Springfield, (1797-1803). At the September election in 1796, there seems to have been no choice for representative to Congress. Mr. Buck was candidate for re-election at this time, and received every vote but one (sixty-four out of sixty-five votes) cast in Norwich. He probably received a minority of votes in the district, as at a second election held May 22, 1797, he does not appear as a candidate, Lewis R. Morris receiving twenty-two votes in Norwich to twenty for Scott Hall and sixteen scattering. Mr. Buck was again elected to the legislature in 1806 and '07, and is said to have rendered valuable services to the town on these occasions

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\*It is a noteworthy fact that the opposition to Vermont joining the Union in 1791—so far as appears in the proceedings of the convention itself—was entirely confined to this section of the state. The four delegates (out of a total of 109) who on the final vote withheld their assent to the measure, were all from Windsor county, being Messrs. Moses Warner of Andover, Daniel Heald of Chester, Benjamin Perkins of Bridgewater, and Enoch Emerson of Rochester. See *Governor and Council Vol. III, pp. 467-482*, for a brief report of the proceedings and debates of the Convention.

in securing certain changes in the location of the turnpike road then recently laid from Hanover bridge through Norwich to Chelsea court house. In 1809 Mr. Buck was again a candidate for the legislature, but was defeated by Pierce Burton (Burton ninety-six, Buck seventy-three, scattering thirteen). Other offices held by him during his residence in Norwich were, member of the Council of Censors, 1792; Attorney General of the State, 1794; State's Attorney of Windsor County, 1802 and 1803,—Dartmouth College gave him the honorary degree of A. M. in 1799.

Mr. Buck took high rank as a lawyer, and as an advocate was often pitted against the best legal talent of his time in the Vermont courts. He acted as counsel for Ira Allen in 1792, in an investigation ordered by the legislature into his accounts and official conduct as treasurer and surveyor general of the State. John A. Graham, in his "Descriptive Sketch of Vermont," published in 1797, speaks of him as possessing legal abilities of a high order. During his residence in Norwich the following well-known gentlemen, among others, were law students in his office: Ebenezar Brown, Aaron Loveland, William Baxter of Brownington, and Hon. William A. Palmer of Danville. The present aspect and surroundings of the place where these young men imbibed the first principles of the law, would now be thought fully as extraordinary for the location of a law school, as Rev. Dr. Asa Burton's old parsonage in Thetford would be as the site for a theological seminary.

The fourth Congress met at Philadelphia, December 7, 1795, and Mr. Buck made the journey to the capital on horseback from his Vermont home. The story is still current among the older people of the town, that on the day of his departure for that distant city—more distant in point of time and fatigue to the traveller than the trip to San Francisco is now—the inhabitants of Norwich in large numbers assembled and accompanied him on his way as far as the Hartford town line, where they wished their honored townsman a prosperous journey, and bade him farewell with manifestations of feeling not unlike those now attending the departure of friends on an extended journey in foreign lands. As to his services in Congress, but little can here be said. He seems to have participated considerably in the current debates, among the most exciting of which



was that relating to Jay's treaty with Great Britain. Mr. Buck strongly favored the treaty. He spoke against a resolution of inquiry calling on the president to furnish the house a copy of the instructions to Mr. Jay, under which the treaty was negotiated, with correspondence and documents. He was opposed, it appears, to discussing the constitutionality of the treaty or to the legislative department assuming an attitude of hostility to the executive. He supported a bill providing for an increase of compensation to public officers and stated, incidentally, that he had diminished his income \$1,000 a year while serving as a representative. In this connection he alluded to having "shed his blood" for his country and to his "mutilated frame."\*

He favored direct taxation by Congress, voting for a tax on land and its improvements, and also for increasing the duties on foreign goods. His votes and speeches show him to have been a high Federalist in politics.

Mr. Buck was at one time quite an extensive owner of landed property in town. The house built by him and used as a residence was taken down a few years since and was last occupied by Henry Goddard. The large orchard a short distance east of the house and adjoining the highway was planted by him, and is still familiarly known as the "Buck orchard."

In his later years he seems to have become embarrassed in his pecuniary circumstances, and he finally died poor. A fatal habit of intemperance hastened his downfall and probably brought him to a premature grave. The occasion of his removal to Chelsea in 1809 has been variously related. C. W. Clark, Esq., the historian of that town, says that Mr. Buck was committed to Chelsea jail for debt, and obtaining the freedom of the prison (jail limits) took up his residence there and remained until his death, practising his profession for the most part until that event. Another informant gives a somewhat different account. He says that Mr. Buck sold

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\*As early as 1787, Mr. Buck had petitioned the legislature of Vermont for a pension of \$5 per month, "in consequence of the loss of his arm in the battle near Bennington, August 16, 1777." In the year 1807, Mr. Buck was a petitioner to the Congress of the United States for an increase of pension, alleging that the pension he was receiving as an invalid was insufficient. He stated in his petition that he served in the Revolutionary army in 1775 and '76, and was wounded at Bennington in 1777.



his farm in Norwich and borrowed money extensively there, and then removed to Chelsea and there built a house with the borrowed money; soon he made over his property to his son, D. Azro A. Buck, was discovered by his Norwich creditors to be insolvent, and was imprisoned in jail; his son became his bondsman, and he was given the freedom of the jail limits, and died in that condition; that he practised his profession but little after removing to Chelsea, and was deranged during his last years. The house that he built in Chelsea is still standing, and is one of the old substantial houses of the village.

Mr. Buck was married to Content Ashley, of a respectable family of Norwich, September 22, 1786. Of this union eleven children were born previous to 1809, of whom seven (four sons and three daughters) were then living. The graves of the other four may be found in the old graveyard close by the family home. Mr. Buck himself died at Chelsea August 16, 1816. His remains sleep in the village cemetery there, marked only by a plain slab, giving simply name, age, and date. His age was sixty-two years.

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#### HONORABLE D. A. A. BUCK

Daniel Azro Ashley Buck, the eldest son of Honorable Daniel and Content (Ashley) Buck, was born at Norwich, Vt., April 19, 1789. He received a collegiate education, graduating at Middlebury in 1807, in the same class with William Slade and Stephen Royce, a class which is said to have contained more eminent men in proportion to its numbers than can be matched in the record of any American college.

The following year he graduated from West Point Military Academy, and was appointed second lieutenant of engineers, to date from January 25, 1808. Oliver G. Burton, a native of Norwich but at that time a resident of Irasburg, was also a graduate from West Point of the same year.

D. A. A. Buck served on the northern frontier during the second war with England. He was commissioned a captain in the Thirty-first Regiment of United States Infantry, an organization composed

wholly of Vermonters, April 30, 1813, raised for one year's service. Ethan Burnap of Norwich was captain of a company of the Thirty-first and his brother, Calvin Burnap, lieutenant. At other times during the war, Mr. Buck served as an officer of artillery, and in November, 1812, was appointed major in a volunteer corps by the Vermont legislature, though it is doubtful if he ever accepted this appointment.

At the close of the war he left the military profession, studied law with his father at Chelsea, Vt., and for the ensuing twenty years was a prominent figure in public affairs in Vermont. During this period he represented Chelsea fourteen years in the state legislature, five years of which he served as speaker of the house. He twice resigned his position as speaker to accept an election to the national legislature, in which he represented Vermont in the Eighteenth and Twentieth Congresses (1823-25 and 1827-29). He is said to have been one of the best presiding officers that ever sat in the chair of the Vermont assembly. Out of twenty-one consecutive years following 1815 there were but two (1830-31) in which he was not a member of some legislative body. He was also, during this time, state's attorney of Orange County five years, presidential elector in 1820, a general in the militia, and a high official in the Masonic order in the state. In 1836, he removed with his family to Washington, and accepted an appointment as clerk in the Indian bureau of the War department, in which city he died December 22, 1841.

Daniel A. A. Buck is remembered as a gentleman of the old school, of graceful and easy manners, popular address and a fluent speaker. He probably was less eminent as a lawyer than his father and as a congressman relatively less prominent. He served in the Eighteenth Congress on the committee for public expenditures, and in the Twentieth on that of military affairs. He made a speech in the house in favor of abolishing the office of major-general of the army, and against the appointment of a Board of Visitors to West Point, and detailing the history of that institution. It would seem as if his military training and experience had not impressed him favorably towards the academy or its management. On the election of President by the house of representatives, in 1825, he voted with the Vermont delegation in giving the vote of the state to John Quincy Adams.

Like his father, he was a Federalist in politics, and favored protective duties, voting for the tariff of 1828, although taking no part in the debates over that measure in the house. Like his father, too, he was addicted to strong drink, became dissipated in later life, and finally filled a drunkard's grave. Although hardly come to middle age and the time at which most men reach the maturity of their powers, he had doubtless seen the height of his influence and reputation some time before his removal to Washington in 1836. When Mr. Buck first went to Congress in 1824, his college classmate at Middlebury, William Slade, was serving as clerk in the State department at Washington. Soon after the expiration of Mr. Buck's congressional life, Mr. Slade began (in 1831) a period of twelve years' continuous service in the same body. In 1836, therefore, the respective positions of the two men were exactly reversed, Mr. Buck being at that time a government clerk—a position he soon lost because of incorrigible intemperance—while Slade was just beginning a course of wide and honorable public service to state and country, continuing thenceforward for a full quarter of a century.

In sketching thus briefly the career of these two men, the elder and the younger Buck, one cannot fail to note the sad commentary furnished in their lives on the strength of the passion for drink to wreck the prospects and blast the happiness of the strongest minds. The father, imprisoned for debt, dies in poverty and disgrace upon the jail limits of Orange County. The son, expelled for drunkenness from a petty government office, is supported by his faithful wife in his last years, by keeping boarders at the capital of the nation, where both himself and father had for many years represented Vermont in the halls of Congress. Vermont, that loved to honor them in their younger and better days, will yet drop a tear of sorrow over their untimely and dishonored graves.\*

Of the large family of children born to Daniel Buck in Norwich, nothing further is known. So far as ascertained, none of his descend-

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\*D. A. A. Buck was buried in the Congressional burying ground at Washington, the Vermont delegation in a body attending his remains to the grave. By the influence of the Vermont delegation in Congress, he was more than once restored to his clerkship, after dismissal on account of his intemperate habits, on his solemn promise to reform. [So wrote Honorable Hiland Hall in February, 1885, almost ninety years old, and member of Congress from Vermont 1833-1843].

ants have remained in the vicinity as permanent residents. Four children at least, we are told, of D. A. A. Buck survived him at Washington, two sons and two daughters. One of the sons, of brilliant promise, died while comparatively a young man. The second, Daniel by name, was many years a clerk there, where he was remarkably efficient and useful to congressional committees as he was able to find readily anything wanted belonging to the library or archives of Congress. For his valuable services in this direction he was kept in office by the Vermont delegation when he would otherwise have lost his place; for he, too, inherited or possessed the fatal family appetite for spirituous liquors. He lived for many years with a maiden sister in Washington, but both are now deceased. The other sister, married and residing somewhere in the West, is supposed to be still living.

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### THE BUSH FAMILY

Captain Timothy Bush, the progenitor of this family in town, came to Norwich in the early days of its settlement (from what place is not known). He married Deborah House, and they had ten children (five of whom were born in Norwich), *viz.*, John, Barzilla, Timothy, Fairbanks, Alexander, Bela, Harry, Nathaniel, Mary, who married Nathaniel Seaver, and Lavina, who married Doctor Hamilton of Lyme, N. H.

Captain Bush appears as a voter in town in 1772, and March 9, 1799, he was chosen one of the board of five selectmen. He was prominent in town affairs till about the time he removed to the State of New York (about 1809), where, it is reported, he died in 1815. It is current with some persons that he ended his days here in Norwich and that he was buried in the old graveyard near the mouth of Pompanoosuc river, but no gravestone can be found to indicate his burial there.

When Captain Bush located in Norwich it was in the Pompanoosuc section of the town, where he became an extensive landowner.

He was one of the original proprietors of the town of Orange, Vt., chartered by the state in August, 1781. His son, John, with Paul Brigham, Nathaniel Seaver, John Hibbard, Elihu White, and John White, were other Norwich men who were proprietors of that town,



and his sons, Fairbanks and Timothy, Jr., were among the early settlers of the place, the former being elected selectman and also lister on the first organization of the town, March 9, 1796.

What follows will show how Captain Bush served his state in a military capacity. We are allowed to copy from a private letter the following information which the writer obtained from the Adjutant General's office at Montpelier, Vt.:

"From a pay-roll of Captain Timothy Bush's company in Colonel Joseph Marsh's regiment, it appears that Timothy Bush served as a captain one month and twenty days from August 16, 1777, and received £5-1-8.

"Also, we find that Timothy Bush served as a captain four days in 1777 to assist the Strafford people in their retreat, and received £2-0-0.

"And under the direction of Major Whitcomb, January 21, 1780, it appears that Timothy Bush served as captain one month and twenty-five days, and received £15-6-8.

"Also under the direction of Colonel Peter Olcott at the time the enemy came to Royalton, October 16, 1780, Captain Timothy Bush served three days, and received £1-9-4.

"And from a pay-roll, Captain Timothy Bush's Company of Militia, employed in guarding and scouting at Strafford at the time of the alarm at Newbury, under Colonel Olcott, served seven days, and received £2-1-4.

"And Timothy Bush served one day in 1781, and received £0-8-8."

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### FAIRBANKS BUSH

It is probable that this son of Captain Timothy Bush came to Norwich with his father when the latter settled in town. His place of birth is not known to us. He first appears as a voter in town in 1807. He married Amy Yeomans.

Previous to 1796 he removed to Orange, Vt., but later returned to Norwich, where he died February 24, 1873, lacking but twelve hours of having rounded out a life period of one hundred years.

Fairbanks Bush was Norwich's minstrel poet. We are told that the spirit of our modern age is unfavorable to poetry. However that may



be, the poetical temperament and endowment are still found among men—the poet is still born in the world.

Among our own townsmen, Mr. Bush was endowed in some degree with the poetic gift. As being a natural musician also, his poetry for the most part took a lyrical shape, which is everywhere the earliest and simplest artificial form of poetical composition. “Lyric poetry is made to be sung, and is song in its nature and essence.” Mr. Bush was accustomed to sing his own verses very often from memory. Many that he composed and sung were never committed to writing, and consequently have been lost beyond recall. We give in the latter part of this book a few specimens of the style and scope of his verse.

As has so often been the case with the noble fraternity of the poets, fortune did not always smile upon the lot of Mr. Bush. Perhaps he had not worldly thrift; clearly his affairs were often involved in difficulty. The insatiate creditor, with his ally the sheriff, dogged his footsteps; evidences of which the reader will find in his verses. But though poverty may have clouded his life, there is no proof that his temper was soured or ever gave way to misanthropy. His pent up feelings found relief in song. He once wrote a cutting lampoon upon a Hartford lawyer who had sued him out of town. It happened that the attorney fell sick, and soon after died, from which the saying arose that he died of vexation—the effect of Bush’s poem.

In his personal conduct he was exemplary. He was among the earliest of his townsmen to denounce the crime of slavery. There is reason to believe that the author of “Norwich Wears the Bell” had thought and felt deeply concerning the falling off in the standing and repute of the town from the standard that prevailed in its early days. The movement of the verse is sprightly, but the undertone is sad. The innovations which he sees creeping into Norwich society are not creatures of his imagination, but public scandals, deserving the reprobation of all good men.

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#### PROF. GEORGE BUSH

George Bush, one of the most eminent Biblical scholars and Orientalists of his time in America, was born in Norwich, Vt., June 12,

1796, a son of John and Abigail (Marvin) Bush, and grandson of Capt. Timothy Bush.

The boyhood of George Bush was mostly passed in Hanover, N. H., whither his father removed when he was quite young. The son gave early indications of superior intelligence. His eldest sister says "he had a ravishing love of books from her first remembrance of him." He frequented the College library at Hanover and would bring home ponderous volumes—almost as large as he could carry. Old residents remember him riding to mill on horseback with his face hidden in the pages of an open book that he held before him. At the age of nineteen he entered Dartmouth College, graduating in 1818 with the valedictory and the highest honors of his class, which was of more than average ability, containing among others such scholars as Professor William Chamberlain of Dartmouth College, and the late Professor Thomas C. Upham of Bowdoin College. During a part of his college course, Mr. Bush was a private tutor in the family of Honorable Mills Olcott, and there probably was formed an intimate friendship between himself and Rufus Choate of the class of 1819. The two young men chummed together during the college course, and Mr. Choate ever after kept a high regard for and estimate of his college friend. After teaching one year in the Orange County Grammar School at Randolph, Vt., Mr. Bush commenced the study of theology at Princeton Seminary, where he graduated in 1821, in the same class with Albert Barnes. He resided one or two years afterwards at Princeton as tutor in the College of New Jersey, preaching occasionally in various places in the vicinity, and in 1824 went west on a missionary trip, which resulted in his settlement the following year over a Presbyterian Church in Indianapolis, Ind., where he remained three or four years.

In 1823, he married a daughter of Honorable Louis Condict of Morristown, New Jersey, by whom he had one son, who died at the age of twenty-nine years—Mrs. Bush dying in 1828 or 9, and difficulties with the Presbytery having arisen as to the soundness of the young preacher's views in regard to the Presbyterian form of church government, the pastoral relations with the church were dissolved and Mr. Bush returned to the East and soon after established himself in New York City, where he remained for more than twenty years devoting himself to authorship, lecturing, and scholarly pursuits.

In 1831, Mr. Bush was made Professor of Hebrew and Oriental Literature in the University of New York, and the next year he published "The Life of Mahomet," his first book, it being Volume X of Harper's Family Library. In 1833, the "Treatise on the Millennium" appeared, and in 1835 his "Hebrew Grammar." His "Commentaries on the Old Testament," which went through many editions, were brought out in 1840. "The Doctrine of the Resurrection" followed in 1845. "Mesnier and Swedenborg" in 1847. His last book, "Priesthood and Clergy Unknown to Christianity," the most radical and unpopular of all his works, was published in 1857. Several minor publications of transient interest also followed at various times, and he was always a frequent contributor to periodicals and newspapers. The substance of several of his books was first given in the form of lectures in several cities and towns in New York and New England.

For several years prior to 1845, Professor Bush had been slowly drifting away from the orthodox theology in which he had been educated, and eventually embraced the doctrines of Swedenborg. From the time of his adhesion to the Swedenborgian or New Church, his old friends and associates in the Presbyterian and Congregational Churches, with few exceptions, immediately gave him the cold shoulder. One of the exceptions was Rev. Asa D. Smith, then pastor of a Presbyterian Church in Brooklyn, N. Y., and for many years after President of Dartmouth College.

It is impossible not to feel great respect for Professor Bush—both for his head and his heart, for his intellect and great learning, and for his character and life.

He died September 19, 1859.

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#### PAUL BRIGHAM

Hon. Paul Brigham, son of Paul and Catharine (Turner) Brigham, born in Coventry, Conn., January 17, 1746; married, October 3, 1767, Lydia Sawyer, of Hebron, Conn.; came to Norwich from Coventry, in the spring of 1782, bringing his family with him, all of his children having been born in Connecticut. In 1788, he built the house on

“Brigham Hill,” for many years occupied by his great-granddaughter, the late Miss Louisa D. Brigham. The farm had been previously owned and occupied by Elihu Baxter.

In what esteem Mr. Brigham was held by the people of his adopted state and town, is shown under appropriate heads in other places in this volume.

CAPTAIN PAUL BRIGHAM IN THE REVOLUTIONARY ARMY, JUNE—  
AUGUST 1777.

Mr. Brigham served four years as Captain in the Continental Army in a Connecticut regiment commanded, first, by Colonel Chandler and afterwards by Colonel Isaac Sherman. He entered the Army January 1, 1777, and was discharged April 22, 1781. A portion of the time he served under the immediate command of Washington, and was engaged in the important battles of Germantown, Monmouth, and Fort Mifflin. He was enlisted by General McDougal from Coventry, Conn., and his regiment seems to have been largely composed of men from that section of the State.

We have been privileged to read a fragment of a diary kept by Captain Brigham during a part of his army service above the “Highlands,” which does not cover the time when any of the above named battles were fought (at that time the portion of the army to which he was attached was serving on the Hudson River), and is made up of brief mention of incidents of camp life, regimental and brigade drills, marchings and counter-marchings along the banks of the lower Hudson River near the Highlands where the portion of the American Army to which he was attached was doing guard duty, their immediate object being to prevent Sir Henry Clinton, the British commander in New York, from uniting with General Burgoyne at that time moving southward from Ticonderoga. This record shows Captain Brigham to be a good soldier and a true patriot, zealous for his country’s cause and ever interested in promoting the health and well-being of the men of his command. Officers who were in the late war will not fail to note some things that will remind them of their own experience of camp life eighty years later. The record opens abruptly:

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Paul Brigham, Sr., was married to Catharine Turner July 1, 1741. He died May 3, 1746, aged twenty-eight years. His father died when the son was but a few months old.



“June 23<sup>d</sup>, 1777. Struck tents about 4 o'clock p. m., and began our march back again for Peekskill. Marched back as far as the church and encamped.

“June 24. Colonel Courtland had two men whipped 100 stripes for stealing, each one of which was drummed out of camp.

“June 25. Began our march for the river. I was so much unwell that I got a horse and rode on before the Brigade. Had a sick day, but by night the brigade came to the ferry, where we encamped that night.

“June 26<sup>th</sup>. Crossed the [Hudson] river. The Brigade marched to the Grand Parade and stayed that night, but I stayed behind with Captain Mattocks at the landing.

“On the 27<sup>th</sup> the brigade marched and encamped on a high hill one mile above Captain Drake's battery. I remained so much unwell that I got liberty to go one mile out of Camp to Mr. Graylocks', where I stayed 7 or 8 days. Mr. Sill stayed with me.

“July 4<sup>th</sup>. I went into camp and found we had orders to be mustered.

“On the 5<sup>th</sup> I went after the Judge Advocate to come and swear a number of men that had not taken the oath. Lt. Brigham arrived with some men that belonged to my company.

“July 9<sup>th</sup>. This day heard that the enemy had got possession of Ticonderoga. Last night being dark and rainy, 2 prisoners made their escape from the Provost Guard where Captain Mattocks had command.

“12<sup>th</sup>. To our grief the bad news of our defeat at the Northwest was confirmed. This day Col. Chandler joined the regt.

“Sunday, 13<sup>th</sup>. News came that our army was retreated to Fort Edward without a tent to cover them.

“14<sup>th</sup>. I went down as far as Peekskill, and when I returned I learned that Paul Haradon was dead. He was the second man that I have lost out of my Company.

“15<sup>th</sup>. This day Eng<sup>n</sup> House came to see me and informed me that my family were well. Had intelligence that Gen. Washington was at Pumpton with a considerable part of his Army.

16<sup>th</sup>. This day the Regt. exercised, and as Capt. Mansfield's Company was exercising, one of their field pieces accidentally [exploded].



The fire caught one man's powder box and blew him up and burnt him very much.

"July 17<sup>th</sup>. I saw at guard mounting a negro whipped 100 stripes for aiding and assisting the enemy—in driving off cattle to them. Likewise heard that our troops at Fort Stanwix had taken a great number of prisoners. In the p. m., went on the Grand Parade and saw Cols. Wylie's and Demming's Regts. manœuvre.

"18<sup>th</sup>. On the Grand Parade I saw 3 men whipped each a hundred lashes for desertion. In the p. m., the Regt. was reviewed by Gen. McDougal and I thought made a very good appearance.

"19<sup>th</sup>. This morning I went down to Gen. Varnum's headquarters, to carry a report to Maj. Hoyt. In the evening I was warned on guard.

"20<sup>th</sup>. I went on Grand Parade and from thence with my guard to the church near King's Ferry, where I relieved Maj. Johnston. This day Lord Sterling's Division crossed the river and went up towards Peekskill.

"21<sup>st</sup>. After I was relieved I marched home. Rec'd a letter from my family informing me they were all well. Gen. Sullivan's Division crossed the river this evening and encamped on the Grand Parade.

"23<sup>d</sup>. Lord Sterling had a man hanged as a spy at Peekskill Landing.

"25<sup>th</sup>. Visited the sick in the hospital and the prisoners in the Provost Guard.

"27<sup>th</sup>. Last night Sam<sup>l</sup> Allen of my Company died.

"28<sup>th</sup>. News from New York that the enemy had gone from there on some expedition.

"30<sup>th</sup>. Had Paul Haradon's clothing appraised and delivered to his brother, David H. Had orders to be ready to cross the river next day. Rec'd some shirts for my Company.

"31<sup>st</sup>. Sent our baggage across the river. Rec'd some wages.

"Aug. 1<sup>st</sup>. Capt. Hide and Lt. Adams were discharged the service.

"Aug. 2<sup>d</sup>. Sent our sick to the hospital and prepared to march. Toward night we marched as far as Verplanks and pitched our tents very late in the evening.

"Aug. 3<sup>d</sup>. Got ready as soon as possible and crossed the river. Marched about 4 miles but the rain stopped our further march.

"On the 4<sup>th</sup> had counter orders and began our march back—crossed the river again. A flag of truce from New York arrived as our troops were crossing, to obtain a pardon for Edward Palmer, who was to be executed this day. Returned back and encamped on our old ground. I went up to the hospital to visit the sick—had a wet night.

Aug. 5<sup>th</sup>. I went back to Verplanks to see how Joseph Kingsbury did, as he was left behind. Found he was a little better.

"Aug. 6<sup>th</sup>. The camp was visited this morning by Gen. McDougal. About 11 o'clock I went with a number of our officers to a fine dinner at Capt. Hart's. Returned at evening. The officers were requested to send their pretensions for rank.

"Aug. 7<sup>th</sup>. Visited the sick in the hospital.

"Aug. 8<sup>th</sup>. The whole Army went to Gallows Hill to the execution of Edward Palmer. The militia came in to join the army here.

"Aug. 9<sup>th</sup>. Went to the hospital to visit the sick. Ensign Tilden taken sick. I went out whortleberrying—got caught in a sudden shower and much wet.

"Aug. 10<sup>th</sup>. Got Ensign Tilden out of camp.

"Aug. 11<sup>th</sup>. Went on Grand Parade. Saw 2 men whipped for desertion, and one pardoned for sleeping on his post. Went to Gen. McDougal's to swear to Pay Rolls; in the afternoon on fatigue.

"Aug. 12<sup>th</sup>. This day the first Regt<sup>l</sup>. Court Martial was held that ever was held in the Regiment. Some whipping followed."

The above extracts give us a realistic picture in miniature of the daily life in camp and on guard duty of the American soldier in 1777. Captain Brigham was then in the prime of life—thirty-two years old—but as yet had seen no fighting. The next winter he was to spend with his comrades in misery in Valley Forge, after having had his mettle tried at Fort Mifflin and Germantown the autumn following.

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#### DOCTOR THOMAS S. BRIGHAM

Was the oldest son of Honorable Paul Brigham, and was born in Coventry, Conn., in 1769, coming to Norwich with his father when twelve years of age.

After reaching his majority he studied medicine (with what prac-

itioner is not known) possibly with Doctor Joseph Lewis. This was before the founding of Dartmouth Medical College.

When about twenty-five years old Mr. Brigham married Polly Dana, born in 1769, a daughter of General James Dana, and settled in town, where he practiced his profession for several years previous to 1809, when he removed from Norwich, going to Amesbury, Mass., where he married for the second time, becoming the father of five children by this union. From Amesbury he removed to Maine, where he located as a practicing physician.

While living in Norwich three sons and two daughters were born to Doctor Brigham. These children and their mother remained in Norwich after the husband and father removed from town, and the family were never reunited thereafter.

Doctor Brigham is said to have attained considerable eminence in his profession. He died in 1821.

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### ZEBINA COIT

The death of Zebina Coit at Norwich, September 28, 1886, aged eighty-one years, removed another of the ancient landmarks of the town. Mr. Coit was a son of Captain Samuel Coit, who emigrated to Norwich from the town of the same name in Connecticut over one hundred years ago, and who married Mary Burton, sister of Pierce Burton, Esq., and Henry Burton, at Norwich in 1788.

The ancient seat of the Coit family—a family historic in the annals of Connecticut—was in and around New London. Captain Coit, at that time a youth of nineteen, was present as a soldier at the burning of that town by the British under the traitor Benedict Arnold, and the bloody massacre of the garrison of Fort Griswold on Groton Heights, on the opposite bank of the river, at the same time. He died at Norwich in 1851 in his eighty-ninth year.

Zebina Coit, born in 1805, lived all his days on the paternal homestead, situated on the height of land in the northwest part of the town near the town lines of Strafford and Sharon. Here Captain Coit kept for many years a well known hostelry, in the old times of stage coaches and travel over the turnpike road laid through town from Chelsea court house, and thence to Montpelier in the year 1807.

By reason of the great longevity of his father and himself, Zebina Coit, was, so far as known to the writer, the only surviving representative of the second generation of Norwich inhabitants—the children of the first settlers of the town. One by one the old families that settled up the town and have been more or less identified with its history for a century or more, are passing away. In common with all rural New England, the process of depletion of its population by removal of its young men and women from town to the West and to the cities has long been going on. For more than one hundred years now there has been one constant, unbroken stream of emigration going out from us. Probably there is not a state or a territory in the Union where may not be found natives of Norwich or descendants of these.

With the death of Mr. Coit the family name becomes extinct in town.

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## GEORGE MUSALAS COLVOCORESSES

[*By Captain G. P. Colvocoresses*]

Born in Scio, Grecian Archipelago, October 22, 1816. During the Greek Revolution the Turks invaded that island in 1822, and after narrowly escaping the massacre that followed, George with his mother and two young sisters were carried captives to Smyrna. Through friends in that city he was ransomed and sent in an American brig to Baltimore; much kindness was shown him by members of the Greek Relief Committee, and the story of his misfortunes excited the sympathy of Captain Alden Partridge, head of the military academy then at Norwich, who offered to receive and provide for young Colvocoresses as his son. Accordingly, he was sent to Norwich and his kind benefactor educated him in his military academy and secured for him an appointment in the United States Navy in 1832.

He was a passed midshipman in the Wilkes Exploring Expedition in the Pacific, 1838-'42, and saw service in all parts of the world during his naval career.

He married Miss Eliza Freelon Halsey, niece of Captain Thomas W. Freelon, U. S. N., in 1846, and Norwich continued to be his home until 1863.

As lieutenant and second in command of the U. S. S. "Levant," on the China station, he took part in the bombardment and capture of the Barrier Forts in the Canton River.

At the outbreak of the Civil War he was ordered to the U. S. S. "Supply" and promoted to commander; while in this ship he captured the "Stephen Hart" of Liverpool, loaded with arms and ammunition for the rebels. He was in constant service along the Atlantic coast and in the Gulf of Mexico; blockading the coast of Georgia in the U. S. S. "Saratoga," he conducted several raids into the enemy's country, captured troops, dispersed meetings of rebels, and destroyed salt works and stores. For his zealous and efficient services he was twice thanked in general orders by Admiral Dahlgren and also received the special commendation of the Secretary of the Navy.

At the close of the war Captain Colvocoresses commanded the U. S. S. "Wauchusett" and later the U. S. S. "St. Mary's" in the Pacific where he gave valuable protection to United States citizens in Valparaiso during operations of the Spanish fleet against the Republic of Chili.

In 1867 he was retired with the rank of captain.

His second wife was Miss Adeline Maria Swasey, of Claremont, N. H., a sister of Mrs. Alden Partridge. By his first wife he had four children, George Partridge Colvocoresses, Franka Eliza, wife of J. Denison Champlin, Jr., of New York, Eva Freelon, married to G. E. Jones of Litchfield, Conn., and Ellena Seaman, wife of Doctor Charles W. Haddock of Beverly, Mass.

Captain Colvocoresses was the author of a book called "Four Years in a Government Expedition," narrating events of the first scientific explorations made by our navy in foreign waters. He met an untimely death by the hands of assassins in Bridgeport, Conn., on the night of June 3, 1872.

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### GEORGE PARTRIDGE COLVOCORESSES

Born in Norwich, April 3d, 1847, only son of Captain G. M. and Eliza F. Colvocoresses.

During the civil war he served in the navy as captain's clerk for



over two years on board the U. S. ships "Supply" and "Saratoga." He was a cadet at Norwich University and subsequently entered the U. S. Naval Academy in 1864, graduating in 1869. His naval service has been performed on all the foreign stations and on shore as an instructor at the Naval Academy and at the Hydrographic Office. Promoted to Ensign 1870, Master 1872, Lieutenant 1875, Lieutenant-Commander 1897, Commander 1900, Captain 1905.

Lieutenant-Commander Colvocoresses was executive officer of the cruiser "Concord" in Commodore Dewey's squadron at Manila and was advanced five numbers in his grade for "eminent and conspicuous conduct in battle." He returned home as executive officer of the flag-ship "Olympia." The following two years he was engaged in preparing for publication the "Naval War Records of the Rebellion," after which he was appointed to the command of the U. S. Cruiser "Lancaster," and later the cruiser "Yankee." Since the expiration of this sea duty he has been employed at the New York Navy Yard.

Commander Colvocoresses married Miss Mary Dwight Baldwin of New York City in 1875 and has two sons,—George M., a graduate of Yale University, and mining engineer, and Harold, lieutenant U. S. Marine Corps.

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## COOK FAMILY

Three brothers, Samuel, Francis, and Lyman, with their two sisters, (children of Jonathan and Lydia [Aldrich] Cook), ran away from the Shaker settlement at Lancaster, Mass., where they had been placed by their parents before 1800, and came to this vicinity at an early day. Samuel settled in Norwich, and married Anna Pratt, by whom he had nine children. From Samuel the later generations of Cooks in town were descended.

Francis also located in Norwich, on the farm now occupied by David Sargent, and there he lived and died. He was never married.

Lyman settled in Thetford.

Another brother, Washington, settled in New York State, and himself and his son were made prisoners by the Indians, and taken to Canada, but were subsequently released from captivity.

Seventeen acres of the farm where Samuel Cook located were bought by him at auction when they were sold for taxes, and fifty acres were purchased at private sale from Stephen Percival.

Leonard Cook, son of Samuel, died at Norwich, on the paternal acres, May 13, 1886, aged seventy-seven years. He was the last surviving child of his parents' nine children, all of whom lived to have children of their own,—sixty, all told.

Mr. Cook's son, Royal E., now resides in Norwich Village, having removed from the ancestral home several years since, leaving it in the possession of his son, George, whose children are the fifth generation of the family to live on the place.

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### THE CURTIS FAMILY

Simeon Curtis came to Norwich from Lebanon, Conn., as early as the year 1773, in which year he was elected one of the town assessors, and located near the south line of the town, on the farm where Henry S. Goddard now lives. Mr. Curtis died in 1779 at the age of fifty-eight years, and his grave is found in the old cemetery at Norwich village among the graves of other early settlers and near that of his gifted son, Abel Curtis, who survived his father only four years.

But little is now known of the Curtis family, as its last representatives seem to have disappeared from town more than half a century ago. The maiden name of Mrs. Simeon Curtis was Sarah Hutchinson, and the home of the family was at "Lebanon Crank" as it was called, or that part of Lebanon which is now Columbia, Conn., and which was the immediate locality of Moor's Indian Charity School founded by Doctor Eleazer Wheelock, out of which grew Dartmouth College.

Captain Solomon Cushman, who came to Norwich the same year with Simeon Curtis, had married in 1768, at Lebanon Crank, Sarah Curtis, probably a daughter of Simeon Curtis. He removed to Tunbridge, Vt., in 1784, where he was preceded several years by Elias Curtis, another son of Simeon, who had previously lived in Norwich, and where two or more of his children were born (Elias, b. July 4, 1776—Abijah, b. March 11, 1781), but had removed and was living near the first branch of White River in Tunbridge at the time of the

burning of Royalton in 1780, and who was carried into captivity to Canada at that time, where he remained till the close of the war. Elias Curtis died in Tunbridge, October 16, 1830, just fifty years to a day from the time of the attack on Royalton, having been a prominent and much esteemed citizen of that town, which he represented in the legislature and in the convention which in 1791 adopted the constitution of the United States, preliminary to the admission of Vermont into the Union. The wife of Elias Curtis was also Sarah Hutchinson and sister of Abijah, John, and Hezekiah Hutchinson, all from Lebanon, Conn., and pioneer settlers in Tunbridge and Royalton.

A brother of Elias Curtis, Simeon Curtis, Jr., married Abigail Rood of Royalton and settled in Tunbridge at an early day, and reared a family of five children. Two of his sons, Abel Curtis and Asahel Curtis, removed in 1810 to the new town of Lowell, Vt., where they were distinguished for their enterprise and intelligence in building up the town. Abel Curtis was the first town clerk of Lowell, an office which he held twenty-seven consecutive years, with two years' exception; was the first justice of the peace, which position he held twenty years; the first postmaster; built the first frame house; the first grist mill; was member of constitutional convention, etc. He died in 1879 at a very advanced age.

Asahel Curtis represented Lowell in the legislature in 1812, '14, and '18.

Don Brigham Curtis, son of Abel Curtis, has been town clerk of Lowell since 1866, has represented that town in the legislature two years, as has also, repeatedly, Don Eugene Curtis, a son of Don B. Both of these have for many years been leading men in business and public affairs in Lowell, and the Curtis family are altogether still showing a strong vitality and strength of character.

Of the Curtis family in Norwich, two daughters of Abel Curtis, Esq., survived him. Lucy, the eldest, (born February 22, 1780), married Hon. Thomas Emerson. Of the younger, Sally, (born December 6, 1782), we have no information.

Samuel Curtis, probably a son of Simeon Curtis, married Amy Chandler, May 8, 1788. He is believed to have lived on the Simeon Curtis farm (now H. S. Goddard's). Several children were born to him from this union prior to 1794, of whom Abel Curtis (born Oc-

tober 26, 1790) was one. Still later Solomon Curtis seems to have owned and occupied the same premises. He sold the farm to Doctor Joseph Lewis in 1800, and from that date the Curtis family, so far as we are informed, disappears from Norwich.

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### ABEL CURTIS

In the abundance of able men that adorned the first twenty-five years of the history of the town, there is no more brilliant name than that of Abel Curtis.

He was a son of Simeon Curtis and came with his father from Lebanon, Conn., where he was born June 13, 1755.

The son graduated from Dartmouth College in the class of 1776, being the first graduate from this town, one year earlier than the Rev. Asa Burton.

Abel Curtis is first mentioned in connection with town affairs in November, 1778, when he was chosen delegate to the Cornish convention of December following, in company with Peter Olcott and Nathaniel Brown.

From this time until his death in 1783—a period full of important events shaping the future of state and country—he was prominent in all the transactions of the town, representative for three years in the legislature; serving on many committees; delegate to Congress in 1782, with Ira Allen and Jonas Fay; assistant judge of the county court in 1782; delegate to the Charlestown convention of January, 1781, sitting at Windsor, by the joint action of which with the legislature of Vermont, the second union of New Hampshire towns was effected on the 22nd of February, following; delegate to the Thetford convention of June 1782, by which he was commissioned agent of the towns of Hartford, Norwich, Bradford, and Newbury to carry to the Government of New Hampshire a memorial, drawn up by himself, proposing to place said towns under the jurisdiction of that state, in certain contingencies. The last public service he performed for the state was as chairman of a legislative committee to secure the services of a state printer, which resulted in a contract with Hough and Spooner, who came to Windsor from Norwich, Conn., and acted as printers for the state for the term

of eight years. We have hardly space to enumerate the town offices he held in these years. He was elected town clerk in March, 1780. The records of the town meetings from the organization of the town up to the time of his death in 1783 are in his handwriting.

These records he appears to have carefully copied from the note books and memoranda of earlier clerks and clearly arranged in a new volume. He was elected justice of the peace in 1781, was town treasurer in ———, first selectman in 1781-'82, lister, grand and petit juryman, and representative elect to the legislature at the time of his death. He also acted as a member of a committee to build the first meeting house.

#### AN UNSUNG WORTHY

[*W. W. Morrill, Esq.*]

In the old burying ground on Norwich Plain, a crumbling tombstone, adorned with the marvellous skull and scroll-work of the Revolutionary sculptor, bears the following inscription :

" In Memory of  
 " ABEL CURTIS, Esqr  
 " who  
 " 1783  
 " Beneath  
 " lies at  
 " whom heaven had blest  
 " with Genius bright & love  
 " Divine which now in  
 " Relms of Glory Shine."

The missing words have disappeared with the shale upon which they were engraved, and must be sought elsewhere or imagined.

At the foot of the grave, upon another stone almost as large as the first, the inscription intact, as though "the carking tooth of time" had purposely spared to future generations this monument of orthography and song to the scholar whose glory is predicted, reads :

" Abel  
 " Curtis Esqr  
 " Here lies <sup>e</sup> dust of  
 " one whos Generous  
 " soul is gone to seats  
 " of high Renown  
 " to ware a Glorious  
 " Crown."



The first, though not the earliest, entries under the head of "Marriages, Births, Deaths," in the first book of records of the town of Norwich reads:

"Abel Curtis married to Kezia Brown, May 12, 1779."

"Lucy Curtis, born 22d February, 1780," and the opposite page is headed with: "Abel Curtiss Esq" died October 7, 1783."

The general catalogue of Dartmouth College contains, as it has or may have done for a century past, the following entry:

"1776 Abel Curtis, f. A. M. 1783. 28"

Who and what was Abel Curtiss (for so the name is always spelled by himself); this youth who left his *alma mater* at the age of twenty-one, whose subsequent career was almost coincident in time with the war of the Revolution, who became a farmer, a husband, and a father, and who died a hundred years ago, aged twenty-eight?

A little book, believed to be the first literary production of a Dartmouth graduate, or of a citizen of Vermont, as well as the first purely English grammar written and published in America, but a single copy of which is now thought to exist, bears the following upon its title-page:

"A compend of English Grammar; being an attempt to point out the fundamental principles of the English language in a concise and intelligible manner, and to assist in writing and speaking the same with accuracy and correctness.

"Written by Abel Curtiss, A. B."

"While Education bears her gentle sway,  
And we her precepts cheerfully obey;  
While every breast glows with the gen'rous flame  
And Britons envy our increasing fame;  
In mighty pomp America will rise,  
Her glories spreading to the boundless skies,

"Dresden; Dartmouth College.

"Printed by J. P. & A. Spooner, 1779."

The events of the seven years between Abel Curtiss' graduation and his death, crowded with the stirring scenes of the war for independence, are doubly interesting to the student of early Vermont history; they possess a still greater charm for him of the Connecticut river towns.

When Abel Curtiss left the college on the eastern bank for the farm

on the western, the united colonies had just declared their independence of the British crown, the people of the New Hampshire Grants, whose territory was separately claimed by Massachusetts, New Hampshire, and particularly New York, were about declaring themselves an independent state; and the towns on either bank of the Connecticut had a special concern that they might not be separated from each other in the division into states. So while with the new-made states they fought the savage and the Briton, common foes, the river settlers had three distinct contests to wage against individual states, and still another with whomsoever sought to make the Connecticut a boundary.

The town of Norwich, now almost a Sleepy Hollow with a Deserted Village, was in Abel Curtiss' time one of the foremost towns in the infant commonwealth; so important that when the first Governor's Council was formed, in 1778, while other leading towns furnished each one of the twelve councillors, Norwich alone gave two.

The records of the town bear ample testimony that the Norwich fathers were able and influential men; so that when Abel Curtiss took the freeman's oath it was by no means wholly for lack of efficient material that he was at once put forward as a leader in civic affairs; that now he is appointed upon a committee to lay out a highway from the river across the town; now an assessor to assess the inhabitants to pay a scouting party; now to take the list of inhabitants with a view to providing for the minister's support; now to estimate the value of the several pews in the new meeting house, the finest in the state; now "to treat with the trustees of Dartmouth College respecting the expediency of endeavoring to obtain a lottery for the purpose of erecting a bridge across the river between this town and Dresden"; that he held all manner of town offices and several at a time—surveyor of highways, sealer of weights and measures, petit-juryman, grand-juryman, selectman, town treasurer, town clerk, justice of the peace; that he represented the town in the Vermont assembly in 1778, 1781, and 1782; that he was appointed a delegate to almost every one of the frequent conventions in which his town was interested. Nor certainly in larger fields was it from paucity of able and experienced men that he became one of the judges of the County Court; that in company with two of the foremost men of the state he was sent to the American Congress at Philadelphia to solicit admission to the Union; that he was appointed

by the governor a member of the "board of war"; that he held other delicate and responsible positions.

Important as were his services to town, county, and state, Abel Curtiss' political labors were chiefly directed to keeping the Connecticut river towns united in civil relations.

Prior to 1764 the territory of New Hampshire and Vermont had been under a single jurisdiction. The two banks of the Connecticut had been settled by neighbors, who had remained neighbors, whose customs and interests were identical. The division in Colonial times had affected them but slightly. But when it became a question of forming independent states, the feeling of indifference gave place to one of great concern that the river towns should not be separated.

Of these river towns, Norwich on the one bank was, as we have seen, important; on the other side was Dresden, the portion of Hanover, three miles square, which contained the college, and which New Hampshire had placed under the jurisdiction of President Wheelock as magistrate. These two important places were centrally located from north to south, and approximately so from east to west, should Vermont be allowed to extend to "Mason's Line"; and the capital, which would doubtless be located on the river, might well come to one of them.

At all events, the college authorities were deeply interested, together with many east-bank towns, as was Norwich with those on the western bank, to remove the boundary from the river. What wonder that both parties saw in Abel Curtiss, one of the earliest graduates of the college, and doubtless the first collegian whom Norwich had produced, young, talented, and ambitious, a valuable coadjutor in their plans, and that he at once became a leader in the movement!

\* \* \* \* \*

Finally, no better tribute can be paid to the patriotism of this almost prodigy of the olden time, than the reproduction of the following extracts from a letter written to a college classmate who had joined the enemy:

"For Mr. Levi Willard:

"To the care of any patriot; supposed to be with the British forces at the Northward, unless taken,

*“My dear Willard:*

“You can hardly guess my surprise and grief when first I heard the melancholy news that you had forsaken a father’s house, friends, and acquaintances, and had gone: gracious Heaven, where? To join yourself with (let me use as favorable terms as possible) those savage and unnatural destroyers of our country — — —. If you think our cause unjust, I shall not at present multiply words; only ask you to look into the natural and equal right every man has to freedom, and then see if one may in justice assume power over another so as to ‘bind him in all else whatever’ — — —. It is this arbitrary power these states are opposing; and indeed I am so convinced of the justice of our cause that should every man in the United States of America, even to his Excellency General Washington, willingly submit to the power of Britain, which I am confident is far otherwise, I should by no means be persuaded that we are not fighting in the cause of heaven and mankind. — — — That you may be thoroughly convinced of your error, return to your allegiance to the American States, be a faithful and true subject of the same,—and experience the happy, happy effects of a pardon from God and your country is, once dear sir, the hearty desire and prayer of your well wisher and my country’s devoted servant.

“A. CURTISS

“Dartmouth College, Sept. 22, 1777.”

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### DOCTOR SHUBAEL CONVERSE

The son of Shubael and Phoebe Converse, was born at Randolph, Vt., September 7, 1805. He studied his profession with Doctor R. D. Mussey of Hanover, N. H., and at Dartmouth College, graduating at that institution in 1828.

Soon after he settled in Strafford, where he resided in the practice of medicine until 1837, when he purchased the business and homestead of Doctor Horace Hatch at the southern border of Norwich village, and removing there was engaged in the active pursuit of his professional duties for a period of thirty years, until his sudden decease August 6, 1867. Doctor Converse possessed in a high degree the respect and confidence of the community, both as a citizen and a physician. A man of enlightened views and much public spirit, he was especially interested in the cause of popular education. He was superintendent of schools



in Norwich from 1846 to 1854, and again in 1855 and 1856. After the removal of Norwich University to Northfield in 1866, he was prominent in establishing the Norwich Classical and English Boarding School the following year. He represented the town in the legislature in 1845 and 1846 and was chosen a Senator from Windsor County in 1855 and 1856. Among other young men who pursued medical studies with Doctor Converse at Norwich were Doctor Henry Baxter of Highgate and Doctor Charles D. Lewis of Kentucky.

Doctor Converse married in 1841, Louvia E. Morrill, daughter of David and Margery Morrill, of Strafford, Vt., to whom were born two sons and three daughters. The eldest son, Charles B. Converse, graduated at Dartmouth College in 1863, and is now a practising physician in Jersey City, N. J. He received the degree of M. D., at Bellevue Hospital Medical College in 1871.

Doctor Converse was a cousin of Governor Julius Converse of Woodstock, also a native of Randolph, where the Converse family appears to have been an influential and numerous family from an early period.

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#### REAR-ADMIRAL GEORGE A. CONVERSE

Born at Norwich, May 13, 1844, son of Dr. Shubael and Louvia (Merrill) Converse; was a cadet at Norwich University from 1859 to 1861; graduated from the U. S. Naval Academy in 1864, with the highest honors in a class of 64 members; attached to the European squadron, 1865-'69, 1870-9 and 1883-85; instructor at the torpedo station at Newport, R. I.; in command of the U. S. S. Montgomery during the war with Spain; now chief of the bureau of navigation, U. S. Navy. He married Laura Shelby Blood, daughter of Henry and Laura (Shelby) Blood, to whom were born several daughters.

Admiral Converse's great ability in his chosen profession has received merited recognition from his brother officers.

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#### THE CUSHMAN FAMILY

The Cushman family in New England dates from the year 1621, the first after the landing of the Pilgrims from the Mayflower, when Rob-



ert Cushman, who was a prominent leader and organizer of the Plymouth Colony, brought from England the earliest recruits and supplies to the wasted and famishing settlement.

A century and a half later Solomon Cushman, a descendant of Robert, in the sixth generation, born at Plympton, Mass., in 1745, having married Sarah Curtis, daughter of Simeon Curtis, at Lebanon, Conn., in 1768, removed to Norwich, probably in company with the Curtis family.

Solomon Cushman (afterward known as Captain Solomon) was in those days a famous hunter and marksman, the terror of bears and catamounts. He once shot and killed a deer at a distance of seventy-two rods. In the war of the Revolution he served three years as lieutenant in the Norwich militia in the campaign of 1777 against Burgoyne, and the following two years on the northern frontier as captain of a company of Rangers in the regiment of Colonel Timothy Bedel of Haverhill, N. H. His health was much broken as a result of his service in the army. In 1784 he removed to Tunbridge, Vt., where he died in 1799, at the age of fifty-four. His son, Benjamin H. Cushman, born in Norwich, recently died at Tunbridge, upwards of ninety years old, and the father of twelve children.

Three years after the removal of Captain Solomon Cushman to Tunbridge, another Solomon Cushman, the fifth in descent from Robert Cushman, the Pilgrim ancestor, came to Norwich from Willington, Conn., with his family. He was already a man of advanced years, and a portion only of his large family of grown up children seems to have accompanied him to his new home in Vermont. Of three sons who came, Job and Solomon, Jr., after some years' residence in Norwich (where Solomon married Charlotte Vincent), removed to the state of New York. Oliver, the remaining son, married Maria C. Thomas of Lebanon, N. H., in 1795, became a prosperous farmer and reared a family of eleven children. He died in 1852 aged eighty-three. His son, Oliver, Jr., who married Sophia, daughter of Timothy Tilden, in 1839, occupied the paternal homestead near the banks of Connecticut river.

Joseph Cushman, a younger brother of Solomon, Sr., came to Norwich about the same time and settled in the western part of the town. He had previously served four years in the Revolutionary army, and

had been present at Monmouth and other important battles. He died here in 1848, at the age of eighty-nine, having received a pension of \$96 a year for many years. He married Tabitha Johnson, daughter of Captain William Johnson, of Willington, Conn., in 1785, a sister of Seth, Calvin, William, James and John Johnson—all early settlers of Norwich, and four of these also fellow soldiers in the Revolutionary struggle. Mrs. Cushman died in 1856, aged eighty-eight years. Of the descendants of their four children, a granddaughter only, Mrs. Susan Ann Davis, widow of Oscar F. Davis, who died in Andersonville prison in 1864, survives in town.

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### MOSES DAVIS

The records in the U. S. Pension Office show that Mr. Davis married Sarah Sawyer, at Dracut, Mass., April 6, 1785. He came to Hanover, N. H., in 1806 or '07, and from there to Norwich in 1813 or '14. He was a soldier at the Battle of Lexington and it is supposed that he was in the Battle of Bunker Hill.

In 1777 he served at Fishkill on the Hudson and the next year at Valley Forge. He was one of the guard over the spy, Major Andre, one or two nights before he was executed. The aggregate of Mr. Davis' service in the army was over two years.

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### DOCTOR IRA DAVIS

The son of Moses Davis, Esq., was born at Dracut, Mass., probably about the year 1797 or 1798. He established himself in the practice of medicine at Norwich Plain in 1830 or 1831, and there continued till his death in March, 1873. He was in constant practice of his profession for more than thirty years.

During his long residence in town, Doctor Davis interested himself in a great variety of matters outside of his professional work. With William T. Porter\* he edited and published the *Vermont Enquirer*

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\*W. T. Porter, who, in 1856, in connection with George Wilkes, founded in New York City the sporting paper called *Porter's Spirit of the Times*,

from 1829-1831. He was chiefly instrumental in organizing an Episcopal church about 1835. He was a trustee of Norwich University from its start, and always active in its behalf.

He was fruitful in projects of various kinds, many of which it was his fortune never to see realized. For many sessions of the legislature he regularly put in his petition for the establishment of a Bank of Discount at Norwich.

In politics he was a strong partizan, and cultivated party spirit in all the relations of society. He was the only town clerk, as we are informed, who ever thought it necessary in recording a statement of the vote of the town at local or general elections to designate the politics of the respective candidates for office opposite the name of each on the record of the town. He often held public office in town, and was postmaster one or more terms.

Doctor Davis was very well versed in matters outside of his profession, in which he was considered a skillful practitioner, and but for a great degree of hesitancy towards exertion, either mental or physical, he might have reaped a happy reward for his efforts toward gain.

He was married (first) to Polly Hazeltine, by whom he had one child, Charles, who was living in one of the western states, not long since: (second) Rhoda Slack, to whom were born Andrew, Frank, Rosella, Margaret and Belle, of whom only Margaret and Belle are living, the latter now holding an important clerical position in the police department of Boston, Mass., which position she has been an incumbent of for many years. Margaret resides in Minnesota. The third wife was Eliza Crary, who had two sons, one of whom is Doctor George Davis, a successful physician in Manchester, N. H.

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### THE DUTTON FAMILY

The progenitor of this family in Norwich was Samuel Dutton, a lineal descendant of Thomas Dutton of Washington, Conn. Samuel Dutton was born March 1, 1707, and married Abigail Merriam, May 6, 1729. He died in Royalton, Vt., in 1802, and his wife April 6, 1799.

Mr. Dutton came from Washington, Conn., to Hartford, Vt., and from the latter place to Norwich, locating on what is called Dutton hill,

a little west of Norwich village. The original farm, with later additions, is now occupied by Otis Metcalf, son-in-law of the late Deacon John Dutton.

Mr. Samuel Dutton married (first) Johanna Root in 1764; and (second) Rachel Benedict, in 1772, to whom were born eight children.

Mr. Dutton died Feb. 22, 1813, and his wife died July 1, 1828.

Daniel Benedict, son of Samuel and Rachel Dutton, was born August 22, 1773, and died at Norwich September 1, 1849, aged seventy-six years. His wife, Lorana (Smith), to whom he was married December 5, 1796 (born February 15, 1779), died September 15, 1857. From Norwich he removed to Stowe, Vt., and remained there until just before his father's decease, when he returned to Norwich for a short time, then returned to Stowe.

In 1834 he again came to Norwich, and here died.

The late Deacon John Dutton, son of Daniel B. and Lorana (born at Stowe, Vt., August 23, 1818), came to Norwich with his parents in 1834, and continued thereafter to reside on the ancestral acres until his decease January 16, 1888.

Although a lifelong farmer, Deacon Dutton interested himself in other ventures, at times. He represented his town in the Legislature in 1874 and 1876. He was a devoted member of the Congregational church for many years.

His wife (Harriet Anna Lord) to whom he was married June 14, 1848, is still living. Their children were six in number, two of whom are living: Charles Sumner and Hattie Elizabeth, the latter the wife of Otis Metcalf.

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## THE EMERSON BROTHERS

About the year 1792, Elihu Emerson, just then arrived at his majority, came to Norwich from Westfield, Mass.; followed in 1795 by Joseph and later by Thomas, two younger brothers.

These young men became heads of families, and were prominent residents in town for many years.

Elihu was a blacksmith by trade, and carried on business in a shop



that he built a short distance north of his residence on "Norwich Plain."

For his first wife Mr. Emerson married Thankful Grant, and for his second wife Cynthia Brooks. The first wife died in 1834, aged fifty-eight years, and the second wife in 1861, aged eighty years, Mr. Emerson following them in 1873, at the advanced age of over one hundred and two years. He died at his daughter's in Leicester, Mass., from which place his remains were brought to Norwich and placed in the village cemetery.

By his first wife Mr. Emerson had three daughters: Charlotte, who married John Milton Partridge of Norwich; Harriet, who married Doctor Austin Flint, of Leicester, Mass.; and Julia, who never married.

Mr. Emerson was a very agile man until well along in years—placing his hands on his horse's back and mounting thereon from the ground on the seventy-first anniversary of his birth.

Joseph and Thomas were inclined towards trade and speculation. Besides occupying the home field in this direction, they had, before 1812, established large stores of general merchandise at Montreal and Detroit, doing a very extensive business. The latter place was, at that period, the general trading post and distributing point for a large portion of the Northwest Territory. They traded with the Indians and furnished the American army under General Hull and other commanders in that vicinity with large quantities of supplies, and did a very lucrative business.

After having sold out there, Joseph Emerson was engaged considerably as a builder. He built both the Norwich University buildings, the "South Barracks" in 1819-1820, and the north building, a boarding house, in 1830-1831, besides many private dwellings in town. He died at Norwich, January, 1857, at the age of eighty-four years. Thomas Emerson continued active in trade at Norwich and other places. He was also prominent in building the new meeting house of the South Congregational Society, at Norwich Plain, in 1817. After 1820 he was actively engaged in politics. He represented the town 1824-1829 as a Jackson Democrat.

During some of these years the contest waxed very hot between the partizans of Mr. Emerson and those of Judge Loveland, who was op-



posed to him in politics and frequently a candidate for legislative honors. The struggle was made mostly on personal grounds, as far as we have been able to ascertain.

Mr. Emerson was a good representative, in his day and on a small scale, of what has since come to be known as personal politics, and he was a good example of a political "boss." The scenes that attended electioneering and elections at this time are represented as sufficiently discreditable to the town. Rum flowed as freely as water, and the amount of treating, drunkenness, and disorder was utterly sickening to sober minded people.

He removed to Windsor in 1829 to become president of the Windsor Bank. The bank failed in 1835 or 1836, and after passing through an unpleasant ordeal as a consequence of the failure, Mr. Emerson went West never to return to Vermont. While at Windsor he built himself a costly dwelling house—said to be the finest residence in the state at that time. It is the place owned by Hon. E. W. Stoughton. The brick used in building it was all made at Norwich, and the granite for underpinning and cellar was quarried here. These were all transported to Windsor by teams on the same day.

Of course large quantities of liquor were consumed and some of the men who went with their teams were said to have been several days in getting home.

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### REVEREND SAMUEL GODDARD

Mr. Goddard was born at Sutton, Mass., July 6, 1772. We have no information concerning his early life. His opportunities for education are said to have been scanty. After coming to manhood he was for several years in trade with a brother in Royalston, Mass. Here he married his first wife (Abigail Goddard of Athol, a town adjoining Royalston), and here his older children were born.

The mercantile business ended in failure, and Mr. Goddard's thoughts were turned strongly towards the subject of religion. The result was that he became a student for the ministry with Doctor Seth Payson, D. D., of Rindge, N. H. (Doctor Payson was father of Reverend Edward Payson, the eminent divine of a later day.)

After being admitted to preach, Mr. Goddard was employed part of a year at Gilsun, N. H. In the year 1809 he removed to the town of Concord in northern Vermont, a new town in a thinly settled district, a town whose first settlers were largely from Royalston and other neighboring Massachusetts towns.

He was then a man thirty-seven years of age and had a family of six children. A small church had been gathered in Concord previous to the coming of Mr. Goddard, largely through the efforts of Deacon David Hibbard, who had emigrated to that town from Norwich, Vt., in 1799.

Over this church Mr. Goddard was ordained the first pastor September 7, 1809, which relation was maintained about twelve years, until his dismissal June 6, 1821. The church consisted of but seventeen members at the settlement of the new pastor, and received about eighty additions during his ministry. The ordination services were held in the open air (at Concord Corner), and were largely attended by citizens of Concord and adjoining towns. The ordination sermon was preached by Rev. Joseph Lee of Royalston, Mass., from Jeremiah III, 15. A handsome meeting house was built for the church in 1816—large and costly for the time, at an expense of about \$3,000. It was furnished with an excellent bell “the first in all the region round.”

Besides building up a flourishing church at Concord, Mr. Goddard performed considerable missionary labor for the Vermont and New Hampshire Missionary Societies during his residence at Concord. At least three new churches were organized by him during this period—at Barnet in 1816, and at Glover and Barton in 1818.

It is claimed that he established the first Sabbath School in Vermont, composed of the young people of his church, in 1811 or 1812. This he called his “Bible School,” and it was modeled after similar schools then recently started in England. (It is interesting to note in this connection, that the successor of Mr. Goddard over the church at Concord, Reverend S. R. Hall, is credited with being the first to establish educational institutions for the training of teachers for common schools—substantially our modern Normal Schools. This was about the year 1825.)

An invitation to preach as a candidate for the North Congregational Church at Norwich, Vt. (then without a minister) in the autumn of

1821, was followed by his settlement there January 23, 1822, as successor to Reverend John W. Woodward, who had been dismissed the preceding summer. The North Church at this time numbered about one hundred members; and almost immediately there were large accessions. March 3, 1822, twenty-nine new members were admitted; in May, sixteen; and in July, ten; so that before the end of the year sixty new members were added to the church.

"During a ministry of a little over seventeen years," wrote Mr. Goddard in 1838, "there have been five revivals of religion of greater or less extent in this church. In 1821 and 1822 there were added to the church eighty-eight. In each of the years 1826, 1831 and 1835, there were revivals and about forty added to the church as fruits at each season. In the winter of 1836-37, there was a revival in several school districts, chiefly among the Sabbath School children, and sixteen were added to the church. . . . The present number on our list is now (1838) 247, some of whom are non-resident. The society is small and much scattered, and the usual number at public worship is considerably less than the number of church members."

The prosperity of the North Congregational Church under the ministrations of Mr. Goddard, as above outlined, is certainly remarkable. He found it weakened in numbers and resources by the recent organization of a new church at Norwich Plain, less than two miles distant, the seat of a flourishing seminary around which the business, population and wealth of the town were gathering to build up a new and thriving village. At the close of a ministry of over twenty years, during which period his parish was still further depleted by the removal of many families and individuals to the West, he left the church stronger and more united than he found it.

Outside of the special duties of his calling, Mr. Goddard proved himself a valuable citizen in the promotion of the best interests of the town and community. In 1825 he assisted in organizing a town committee for the supervision of the common schools of the town, of which committee he was a member (with Colonel Alba Stimson and others), and chairman for several years. This was before there was any state legislation requiring town supervision of common schools in Vermont. He was instrumental in organizing a Temperance Society in connection with his church and society. July 4, 1827, at the very outset of the

temperance movement in this country, a society was formed from members of the North Church, with others, "on the principle of voluntary abstinence from the use of ardent spirits." On the third of May, 1833, the church, by a solemn resolve, declared "that the traffic and use of ardent spirits, as a drink, was inconsistent with church membership." Early the following year Ralph Waterman, who persisted, after repeated appeals, in selling spirituous liquors to intemperate persons, was expelled from the church.

About thirty years ago, Reverend S. W. Boardman, then preaching for the South Congregational Society at Norwich, reviewed the history of that church in town in a series of historical sermons. His estimate of Mr. Goddard is copied in part below, slightly condensed, but mostly in his own words:

"Mr. Goddard deserves to have a full narrative of his life written. It seems to me, all things considered, that no better or more useful citizen has ever lived in this place. More than any other man ever settled here he might say, I think, 'By the grace of God I am what I am.' His opportunities for early education were exceedingly limited. I have understood that three months completed all his time at school. In mature life he became a merchant, but it was impressed upon him that he ought to preach the gospel. Still he felt that he could not leave his business, but the Lord sent upon him calamity and his store was burned to the ground. Still he pursued his business till reverse following reverse left him nothing more to lose; and being thus divested of all earthly treasures he was ready to enter the Lord's vineyard. He was now thirty-seven years of age, with a family of six children. It is not probable that many are called to preach the gospel under such circumstances, but in Mr. Goddard's case there can be but little doubt that he followed the path of duty. After a brief period of study he commenced preaching . . . .

"At the close of his first settlement of twelve years at Concord, Vt., he was called to Norwich in 1821. His equipment of learning was probably less than that of any other man ever settled over this church. He had, however, a clear, ready mind, a good knowledge of the bible, and he was a man of prayer.

"While he made no pretensions to scholarship he had, above all, the Lord's work at heart. He preached generally without notes, and



though wanting perhaps in the logical method secured by thorough training, he had an aim before him in every sermon, the conversion and sanctification of souls. The earnest manner and godly devotion of the man commanded universal reverence. People were glad to see him in all the neighboring pulpits. He was a favorite at Hanover, where the students never criticised him. They saw in him something higher than the rules of rhetoric or mere human culture, something that silenced and overawed criticism. Speaking in this simple, artless manner he would nevertheless, often rise to a high degree of natural eloquence. A remarkable man, eminently consecrated to his work, he combined every gift of piety and talent directly to glorify God.

"He was settled on a salary of \$600; in some years, I am told, receiving not more than one half of it. In his later years he became nearly or quite blind."

In his domestic life Mr. Goddard seems to have seen many sorrows. He buried two wives, and it was his lot to stand at the graves of several grown up children. His first wife, Abigail Goddard of Athol, Mass., died at Norwich, Jan. 23, 1823, aged 48, just about one year after his settlement. His second wife, Prudence Hayward of Lunenburg, Vt., died at Freedom, Portage Co., Ohio in 1840, after a sickness of four and one half months, where she had gone the previous year with Mr. Goddard to care for his sick daughter Elizabeth. Her age at death was 60 years.\*

Eunice Hutchinson of Norwich, his third wife, whom he married in 1841, survived him 36 years, dying in 1880 at the age of 88.

Of Mr. Goddard's eight grandchildren, the oldest is the daughter of his youngest son. She recalls with marvelous clearness the loving expression of his countenance when he told her the story of Jesus, and as the years go by that impression grows more vivid in her memory.

Rev. Samuel Goddard was known to his friends in Norwich, it is thought, for almost anything rather than as a writer of poetry. In his early years, however, he seems to have given many leisure hours to the composition of verses. One of his grandchildren, Miss Ellen God-

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\*Mr. and Mrs. Goddard left Norwich for Ohio, July 14, 1839, and he did not return until May 23, 1840. During his absence Mr. Goddard preached a part of the time at Freedom, Ohio, where he was invited to settle.

Samuel Goddard, Jr., removed to Ohio with his family in 1841.



dard, has in her possession a small manuscript volume containing about fifty short pieces, written, with few exceptions, previous to his entering the ministry.

All are pervaded by a deep religious tone and express the spiritual longings of one whose whole nature was strongly moved by the contemplation of the great problems of duty and destiny.

They embody the private experience of a man earnestly engaged in working out for himself a solution of these ever-recurring questions of the inner life.

After entering upon his life work as a minister he seems to have seldom indulged his early fancy for rhyming.

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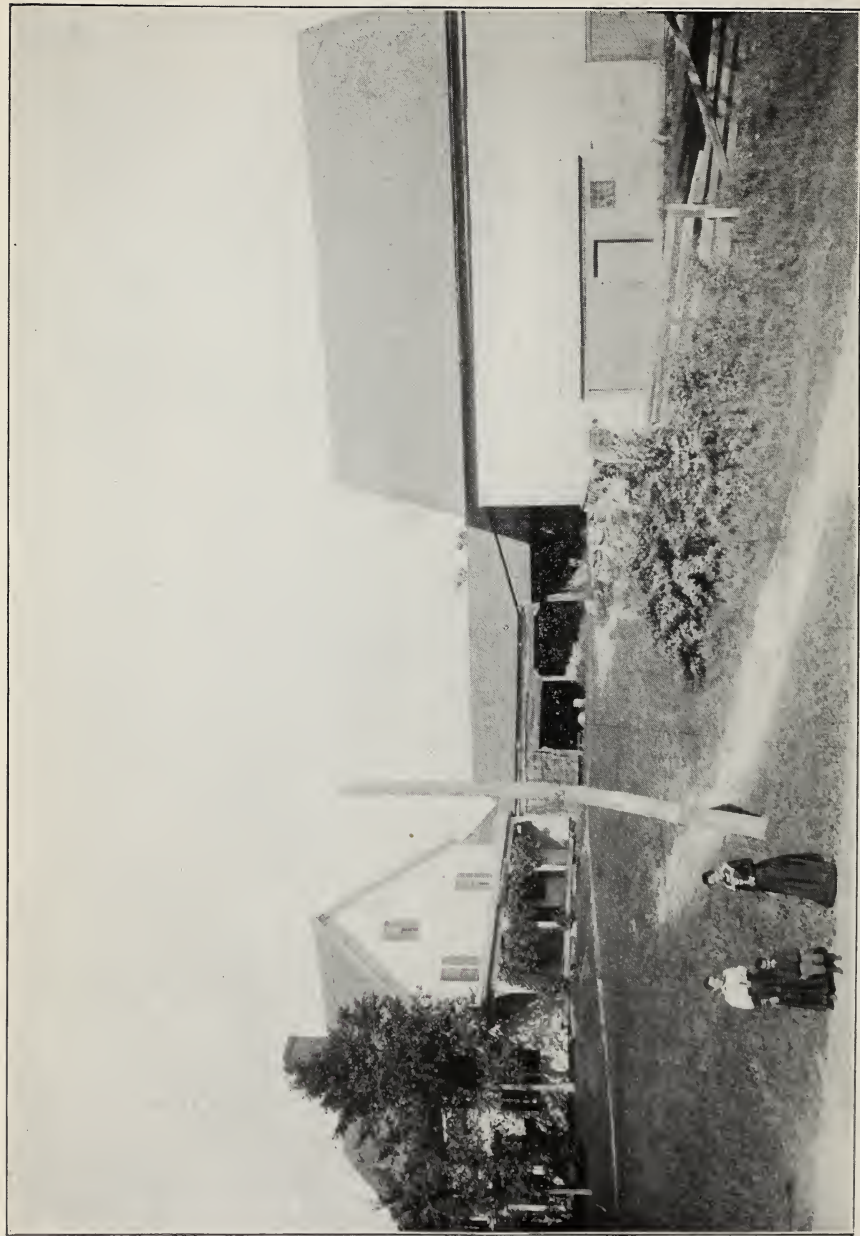
### JOHN HATCH, ESQ.,

The elder of the brothers, John and Joseph, was born at Preston, Conn., June 9, 1727; came to Norwich in the earliest days of its settlement and founded his home on the hill farm owned and occupied at a later day by Deacon John Dutton.

At a proprietors' meeting at Mansfield, Conn., in 1766, Mr. Hatch was elected one of the selectmen of Norwich; at a town meeting at the latter place, held in 1769, he was elected selectman, town clerk and one of a committee of five to lay out highways "where they shall think needful." He held the office of town clerk continuously until 1780, except for the year 1766, when it was filled by Peter Olcott.

Mr. Hatch was a practical surveyor of land, and his services were much in request for that purpose. He made the survey of Norwich into lots in 1766, and laid out in person most of the highways in town during the first twenty-five years after its settlement. In 1778 he was employed to make a survey of the town of Hartford into lots, under the direction of Benajah Strong and Israel Gillett, a committee of that town. At that time he held the office of county surveyor of Cumberland county, by the appointment of the Governor and Council of Vermont. April 10, 1772, he was commissioned a justice of the peace for Gloucester county by William Tryon, the royal governor of New York. He executed the duties of this office for several years, probably until the establishment of state government by Vermont in 1778.





ERASTUS MESSENGER HOUSE, ERECTED ABOUT 1773 BY JOSEPH HATCH  
THE OLDEST DWELLING IN TOWN

Mr. Hatch married Sarah Richards at Preston, Conn., April 7, 1748. Their children were Benjamin, born Dec. 16, 1744; Alpheus, born Dec. 22, 1750; Ashur, born Aug. 27, 1752; Rizpah, born Sept. 30, 1754; Adrian, born July 7, 1756; Naomi, born Dec. 9, 1758, married Jeremiah Percival, Dec. 9, 1799; John, born June 8, 1761; Harper, born Aug. 12, 1763; Sarah, born Dec. 9, 1769, married Jehiel Boardman, March 19, 1789.

Mr. Hatch died April 24, 1806, aged seventy-nine years, preceded by his wife, April 13 of the same year, aged seventy-eight years.

Two of his sons, John and Alpheus, settled on farms near their father's home, the former on the place known in later years as the Neal farm, and the latter on the farm now occupied by Charles Swasey, both farms being on the range of hills next west of Norwich village.

Mr. Hatch was a son of John and Jerusha (Herrick) Hatch, who were married at Preston, Conn., August 31, 1726, to whom were born John (the subject of this sketch); Elizabeth, May 12, 1731, who married Major Thomas Murdock; Rufus, Dec. 5, 1735; Joseph, May 13, 1738; Eunice, June 16, 1741, who married Lieut. Elijah Gates, November ———, 1769.

John Hatch, senior, died in the year 1751.

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### CAPTAIN JOSEPH HATCH

Came to Norwich with his elder brother, John, and located at the south end of Norwich Plain, where he built himself a log cabin on a site near the building now standing and formerly used by the late David Merrill for a paint shop. Subsequently, in 1771, he built the house on the opposite side of the way (now known as the Messenger house) which is believed to have been the first frame dwelling house erected at the Plain. He became the owner of a large amount of land, embracing much of the southern and eastern parts of the Plain, to the Hartford line.

Mr. Hatch's first wife was Elizabeth Brown, by whom he had two children, one of whom, Elizabeth, died October 7, 1776. For his second

wife he married Hannah Freeman, in 1773, and they became the parents of six children.

Captain Hatch was 73 years of age at the time of his decease in town in 1811. His first wife died in 1773 and his second wife in 1810, aged 69 years.

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### HONORABLE REUBEN HATCH

Was born at Preston, Conn., July 7, 1763, and came to Norwich at an early age with his father, Joseph Hatch. He entered Dartmouth College in 1782, but was unable to complete his course of studies there by reason of ill health. Afterwards he turned his attention to agricultural pursuits and became a successful farmer; residing at different times at Tunbridge, Chelsea and Weathersfield.

[From "Life and Times of William Jarvis" we make the following extracts:]

"Mr. Reuben Hatch came from Norwich to Weathersfield Bow and bought the large brick house built by a Mr. Jennison, and considerable other property. He had a large family of sons and daughters. \* \* \* Mr. Hatch also bought" (soon after, probably) "Mr. George Lyman's house, tavern and store," (at the Bow) "and Mr. Lyman returned to Hartford, Conn."

"In 1801 or '02 Mr. Francis Goodhue bought all of Mr. Hatch's property except the Lyman house and a small store. Mr. Hatch then returned to Norwich," [another account says he returned to Norwich in 1808.]

Mr. Hatch represented Tunbridge in the General Assembly in 1792, '93 and '95, Chelsea in 1797, '98 and 1801; was councillor in 1808.

He was candidate for town representative from Norwich, but was defeated by Pierce Burton, and again defeated for the same office in 1812 by Dr. Israel Newton.

Mr. Hatch was married to Eunice Dennison, and they had ten children. One daughter married Darius Jones of Weathersfield and Windsor; one, Harriet H., married Rev. Abraham Peters, a distinguished clergyman and author, October 25, 1819; one married



Joseph Cutting of Weathersfield, who, afterwards, lived at Norwich and built and occupied the house now owned by David Stewart, and later moved to Rochester, N. Y.; one other daughter became the wife of Judge Milo L. Bennet of the Supreme Court of Vermont. The sons were: Dr. Horace, Joseph D., and Albert.

Mr. Hatch died at Norwich Jan. 5, 1818, aged 55 years. His wife died in 1842, at the age of 78 years.

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### DOCTOR HORACE HATCH

The son of Honorable Reuben and Eunice (Dennison) Hatch, was born at Tunbridge, Vt., May 23, 1788. He was educated at Dartmouth College, where he graduated in 1814, and studied medicine at the same institution, receiving the degree of M. D. in 1817. He settled in the practice of his profession at Norwich the same year, where he pursued the active and laborious duties of a country physician for twenty years. He married January 9, 1821, Mary Yates, daughter of Thomas Smith. His children were born here. In the year —, he built upon nearly the same ground where Captain Joseph Hatch had first fixed his abode, the brick dwelling house, now the residence of Mrs. Converse, widow of Doctor Shubael Converse, who in 1837 purchased the property and succeeded to the business of Doctor Hatch; the latter removing to Burlington, Vt., where he prosecuted his profession for another period of twenty years. In 1861 Doctor Hatch accepted an appointment in the Treasury department at Washington where he continued about four years. While thus employed he rendered valuable service in visiting and relieving many sick and wounded Vermont soldiers in hospitals in and about Washington, whose days and nights of suffering were cheered by his kindly sympathy and by delicacies and comforts provided from his generous purse.

In 1865 he became a resident of New York city, where he died Oct. 28, 1873. Mrs. Hatch had died previous to his removal from Burlington. Doctor Hatch held a high standing as a physician and was distinguished for his benevolent and amiable disposition.

His son, A. S. Hatch, of the late banking house of Fisk and Hatch,

was well known in financial circles in the metropolis, and throughout the country as a wealthy and public spirited citizen. In 1883-4 he was president of the New York Stock Exchange. He has devoted largely of his time and fortune to the establishment and support of city missions among the poor and destitute of the great city. Hon. Joseph D. Hatch of Burlington, and Albert G. Hatch, Esq., of Windsor, were younger brothers of Doctor Hatch.

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### THE HUTCHINSON FAMILY

[Previously in print]

HUTCHINSON.—This is an old and numerous family in Norwich, as well as in other parts of the country. They were among the early settlers of Massachusetts and were in Lynn and Salem in that colony as early as 1628, or 1629. A descendant of these early colonists, named Abijah, who was a tailor, removed from Salem to Windham early in the eighteenth century. His son Samuel, born about 1719, in company with his son, John, came to Norwich in 1765. They cleared an island in the Connecticut River, opposite the present residence of John W. Loveland, and planted it with corn. In the fall of that year they returned to Connecticut, and in company with a younger son, Samuel, returned in the spring of 1766, and made a permanent settlement. The elder Samuel spent the remainder of his life in the town, and died February 8, 1809. His wife was Jemina Dunham; she died January 12, 1798. Besides the two sons named above, he had three daughters: Sarah, married Francis Smalley; Tabitha, married Jonathan Delano; Jerusha, married Nathan Roberts. They all died young, soon after marriage.

Hutchinson, John, son of Samuel, was born in 1741, in Windham, Conn., and married Mary Wilson, who was born in Ashford, Conn., in August, 1744. He enlisted in the Continental Army, and died at Philadelphia, June 22, 1778. His widow afterwards married Solomon Strong. His children were Jerome; John, who removed to New York State, where he died; Lydia, who was probably the first child born in Norwich, married D. Hammond, of Thetford; and Abigail, married Honorable John Strong of Woodstock, Vt.

Hutchinson, Jerome, son of John, was born in Ashford, Conn., March 2, 1763, and married Content Smith. Their children were John, who emigrated to New York State, where he died; Fanny, died single; Sarah, (deceased), married William Loveland; Cynthia, (deceased), married Asaph Allen; Sophia, (deceased), married Andrew J. Williams; Mary Ann, (deceased), married Milo Marsh; and William. Jerome died — — —, 1849.

Hutchinson, William, son of Jerome, was born in Norwich, Vt., May 2, 1807, and married, January 8, 1832, Eliza, daughter of James and Mary (Bartlett) Crary; she was born April 2, 1807. Of their six children three died in infancy. The others are John W.; Charles Henry, proprietor of a foundry and machine shop in Manchester, N. H., who has one daughter, Charlotte Augusta; and Frank, a farmer at Hanover, N. H., also connected in business at Manchester, N. H. He has two daughters, Martha Belle and Arabella Waterman.

Hutchinson, Samuel, son of Samuel, was born in Connecticut, September 6, 1751, and married August 16, 1779, Hannah Burr; she was born March 5, 1761. They had fourteen children: Sarah, married Alpheus Hatch; Ira, died at fourteen years of age; Levi, died at thirteen years; Samuel; Jemima, married Seth Stebbins; Perley; Eunice, married Samuel Goddard; Timothy; Betsey, married William Dewey; Levi, died in Illinois; Elihu, died in infancy; Emma, married Jonas Boardman; Hannah, died young; and Austin, died in Norwich without issue. Samuel, Jr., died September 30, 1839; his wife November 11, 1826.

Samuel, son of Samuel, Jr., was born in Norwich, April 12, 1786, and died February 3, 1845. He married, February 26, 1818, Sarah Boardman; who was born May 6, 1792, and died February 14, 1847. Their children were Eliza, who died not quite three years of age; Charles, born July 15, 1820, is a Presbyterian minister, and resides in New Albany, Ind.; Maria, wife of Reuben Loveland of Hartford, Vt.; Jonas Boardman, died young; Samuel; Sarah Isabella, a widow, married, first, Brainard French, and second a Mr. Bosworth, and lives at Minneapolis, Minn.; Hannah Eliza, resides in Norwich; Emma, died young, and Ellen, widow of John O. French, lives at Maxwell, Ia., were twins; Emma Elmina, died young; Caroline Frances, married (first) William S. Throckmorton, and (second), Mr. Eastman, and lives in Lyndon, Vt.

Hutchinson, Samuel, son of Samuel, 2d., was born in Norwich, March 28, 1826, and married Parthenia Blodgett. They had four children: Minnie Barrett, died young; Charles Ashley, resides at Peacham, Vt.; Harriet Maria, and Susan Hazen, wife of Harvey Ladd, of Norwich.

[The following interesting account of the advent of this family into Norwich, is a statement made by Jerome Hutchinson to Reverend Charles Hutchinson of New Albany, Ind., in 1846.]

"I was born in Ashford, Conn., March 2, 1763. Was two and one-half years old in August, 1765, when our family started for Vermont. My father, John Hutchinson, in company with his father, Samuel, had been up that season and cleared the island opposite the David Loveland farm, cutting down the trees so that the spring flood swept the island, when they planted it with corn brought from Charleston, N. H. But the seed failed and it was necessary for Mr. Hutchinson to make the journey on foot to Charleston again for a fresh supply. After planting the second time they returned to Ashford and did their haying, after which John and family set out for Norwich. My grandfather was to move with us. We had only two horses. There were no roads for wagons. Part of their furniture was put on the horse with his mother, with John, the baby, five months old, and the rest on the horse he himself rode. Fell off only once—where a large pine log lay across the path in Lebanon. Arrived at the bank of the Connecticut, where Hanover bridge now is, about sundown. Mrs. Nathan Messenger—the only woman in Norwich—heard from the cabin the cry of a baby on the east side of the river. 'It was the sweetest cry I ever heard,' was her expression ever after.

"Of our passage of the river, the only thing I can remember is the white face of our cow as she swam after the canoe. There were not two acres of cleared land in town at that time.

"The first winter we passed in a log hut in the meadow ten or twelve rods south of the bridge. Our food was mainly the frost-bitten corn raised on the island the previous summer. Major Murdock, at work near us in the spring following, brought us some potatoes to roast for his dinner, and gave me and John, each, one—tasted good!

"Next summer (1776) my father built a house on the hill back of the Lewis place, and lived there two or three years. He owned one hundred acres on the Brown Hill, now (1846) owned by Cloud and



E. B. Brown. Cleared up eight or ten acres and lived on it three or four years. Then swapped for the 'Hopson farm,' but before moving swapped again for one hundred acres on Marshall brook. Here we built a frame house which was burned in January and soon replaced by a log one. The cellar of this house is now (1846) visible by the side of the road, below the Huggett place. As wood grew scarce we moved to the hill [where C. C. Sawyer lately lived] where they could make sugar.

"At the time of my father's death at Valley Forge, June 22, 1778, our family were living on the Johnson place, nearly in front of the brick schoolhouse in what is called the river district."

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### THE JOHNSON FAMILY

Were numerous represented in the early history of the town. Of this family there were several branches. Captain Hezekiah Johnson was an original proprietor of the town and one of its earliest settlers. He settled on the north bank of the Pompanoosuc river near its mouth and fixed his residence where Mr. Richard Waterman now lives. Captain Johnson was born in Woburn, Mass., May 12, 1724, but emigrated to Norwich from Mansfield, Conn. He married, at Mansfield, Dorothy Slafter, sister of Deacon John Slafter, January 25, 1750. He was in the fullest sense one of the "fathers of the town." He was chosen selectman in 1765, '67, '68 and '78 and during the fifteen years following the settlement of Norwich held all the most important town offices. He was a member of a committee appointed by the town that laid out most of the earliest roads in town; was also one of the town committee of safety during the Revolutionary war. He gave to the town land for the old burial ground (about two acres), which lies opposite the place of his residence on the south bank of Pompanoosuc river, where his own and the remains of his family are buried, together with many of the early settlers of the northern portion of the town. He gave liberally to the endowment of Dartmouth College in 1770 (one hundred acres of land and also a contribution in money). He is described as a man of "sound judgment and benevolent disposition."



Captain Johnson died Dec. 22, 1806, and Mrs. Johnson died April 24, 1811.

Samuel Slafter Johnson, son of Hezekiah Johnson, and the only one out of a family of six children who survived him, settled in Norwich, but removed late in life to the state of New York. He was twice married and raised a large family of children, all of whom were born in town.

Dorothy, daughter of Capt. Hezekiah Johnson, married Jeremiah Hedges in 1784 and settled in Norwich. One of their daughters, Lucinda Hedges, married Samuel A. Wright, Jr., in 1810. Another daughter, Leanthy, married Joseph Root, also of Norwich, whose descendants, it is believed, still live in town.

Mrs. Hedges died September 16, 1804.

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### THE LEWIS FAMILY

[*By William E. Lewis, Esq.*]

William Lewis and family, consisting of his wife, Naomi, five sons and three daughters, (Joseph, his eldest son, having been a citizen of the town for some years) came to Norwich in 1781 or 1782 from Windsor, Hartford county, Connecticut, and settled on a farm now owned by Benjamin Clifford, where he resided for a number of years. In 1787 he purchased the farm now occupied by John W. Hutchinson. From time to time he added to it by purchase until at his death it contained 250 acres of good land, mostly covered with a large growth of timber. This farm came into the possession of Noah Lewis, youngest son of William (by will), who owned and occupied it until 1815, when he sold it to Moses Davis, for \$3,000, and himself and family emigrated to Kentucky. This farm remained in possession of the Davis family for more than forty years.

Mr. Lewis was by trade a blacksmith and carried on that business for a number of years in a shop that stood near where O. W. Hazen lately lived.

From the time Mr. Lewis became a citizen of the town he took an

active part in the management of its affairs. He was chosen moderator and selectman in 1784 and '85, and again moderator and selectman in 1786, '87, '88, '89, '92, '93, '95 and '96.

Mr. Lewis died Dec. 15, 1806, and his wife April 28, 1803.

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### DOCTOR JOSEPH LEWIS

Doctor Lewis was the son of William and Naomi Lewis, was born at Old Lyme, Conn., in November, 1746, and came to Norwich, Vt., in 1767.

During his minority young Lewis showed a fondness for the study of medicine and devoted much of his time during the last years previous to his leaving Connecticut to the study of that science. After settling in Norwich he devoted a year or two to further study, after which he commenced the practice of medicine and continued in practice for more than fifty-five years. During a large portion of this time (from 1785 to 1820) his practice was large, and extended not only through Norwich but into Thetford, Sharon, Hartford and Strafford in Vermont, and to Lebanon, Hanover and Lyme, N. H. The larger part of this practice was performed on horseback. In the winter when the roads became impassable for horses, the doctor resorted to snow shoes, guided through the wilderness by blazed trees; always ready to do what he could to relieve the suffering and the ills of the settlers of those days. No plea of inclement weather or poor health was made in order to shirk his duty in visiting the sick. The poor and destitute were welcome to his services and none who showed a desire to pay were pressed to do so.

Doctor Lewis was married in 1771 to Experience Burr, a lady well qualified to fill the position of wife of a physician of the times in which they lived. By her he had eight children, four sons and four daughters. Three of the sons, Lyman, Joseph and Enos, studied medicine at the Dartmouth medical college. Lyman and Enos settled in Norwich and Joseph in Waterbury, where they became successful practitioners. Joel, the other son, was an invalid from childhood and remained at home. One of the daughters, Naomi, died in infancy;

Lucy died at the age of four years; Naomi, 2d., married Doctor David Fisk; Alpa married Abel Partridge, Esq., of Norwich [Vt.]

The doctor first resided in a log house which stood about half a mile southwesterly from Norwich village and about sixty rods from Gideon Lord's farm house [now Myron Armstrong's], where he resided for a number of years. In 1793 he purchased of Aaron Storrs the large, two-story dwelling house which stood where Edward M. Lewis resided (now the house of his widow), together with 100 acres of land contiguous with a gristmill and sawmill standing on the same site that the Doctor Rand mill now occupies. On this farm the doctor continued to reside until his death. In 1800 he purchased of Solomon Curtis the farm now owned and occupied by Henry S. Goddard, which adjoined his home farm on the west. This farm remained in the possession of the Lewis family forty-three years.

In November, 1829, the doctor's dwelling-house and buildings adjoining, together with the furniture, library and provisions in store for the winter, were consumed by fire. They were wholly uninsured. From this time his health rapidly failed.

Doctor Lewis was a man of undoubted integrity. He had decided convictions and never hesitated to express them when necessary. He was social in his habits and fond of the society of his friends and neighbors. He had sound judgment and great self reliance. He was a great reader and well informed on all the general matters of the day. He was neither an office seeker nor office holder. Although often urged by his townsmen to accept office, he invariably declined. Owing to party dissensions at the time, he was elected town representative at the September election in 1808. At the next election he declined to be a candidate.

In 1775 Doctor Lewis suspended his practice, temporarily, having been appointed surgeon's mate and ordered to join the projected expedition by General Washington against Quebec by way of the Kennebec river. The arduous enterprise was committed to Colonel Benedict Arnold. After surmounting incredible difficulties and hardships the expedition appeared before Quebec on the 9th of November of that year and was present at the assault on that place by the troops under the command of General Montgomery, when that gallant officer was slain.

During the winter of 1775-6 Doctor Lewis was engaged in the hospitals, mostly in treating soldiers who had taken the smallpox. Having passed through most of the campaign in Canada, he resigned his office, returned to Norwich, and resumed his practice.

On the 16th of October, 1780, Doctor Lewis, on horseback, with his son Lyman, five years old, behind him, was visiting his patients at quite a distance from his home, when he heard that the Indians were at Royalton and had burned that place. He took his little son from the horse, gave him instructions how to find his way home, borrowed a gun from a neighbor and immediately left for the field of conflict.

Doctor Lewis died June 1, 1833. His wife died Jan. 18, 1819.

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### DOCTOR ENOS LEWIS

The youngest son of Dr. Joseph and Experience (Burr) Lewis, was born at Norwich, Jan. 19, 1784; studied medicine with his father and at Dartmouth Medical College, where he graduated in 1804; surgeon in the U. S. Army, 1808-1810; afterwards practiced his profession in Norwich. He married Katurah, daughter of Beebe Denison of Stonington, Conn., at Norwich, June 28, 1812, by whom he had five children.

Doctor Lewis died at his home in Norwich, on the site of the residence of the late George W. Kibling, September 14, 1823. He was a scholarly man, of sterling integrity, and took a lively interest in the welfare of his fellow men. During the years of his enforced retirement he devoted himself to the instruction of young men who were pursuing the study of medicine, and his boys, for whose education he had the greatest anxiety. Largely for their benefit he collected his library, which at his death numbered eight hundred to one thousand volumes, a large portion of which was burned with the old homestead.

In his profession—though he was in active practice but seven years—he attained unusual success. He acquired a wide celebrity in the treatment of spotted fever, which prevailed epidemically during his early practice, and took high rank as a surgeon, often being called in consultation.



## GEN. WILLIAM E. LEWIS,

[*By the Editor*]

Son of Dr. Enos Lewis, was born here May 25, 1815. He married, March 26, 1846, Ruby W., daughter of Hezekiah Hazen, to whom were born six children, two of whom died in early life; the remaining ones, two sons and two daughters, are established in homes of their own.

General Lewis was in public office as early as 1838, and thereafter was continuously in town office until the time of his decease, January 5, 1892, during that period serving in nearly every elective office within the gift of his people. He was town clerk for forty-nine consecutive terms. In the years 1856, 1857, 1863, 1872-3, 1878-9, he represented his town in the state legislature; from 1863 to 1871 was assessor of internal revenue for the collection district in which he resided.

The General was much interested in military matters; at different times serving as Adjutant, Major, Lieutenant-Colonel, Colonel, and Brigadier-General in the State Militia.

It was not alone as the faithful, competent and long serving public officer that General Lewis best served his people, but with equal fidelity he gave wise and safe counsel to those who appealed to him.

His passing away called forth the following resolutions by the voters of Norwich at the annual town meeting next after his decease:

“*Whereas*, in the course of Providential dispensation our esteemed fellow townsman, General William E. Lewis, has lately been taken from our midst, and

“*Whereas*, we, the voters of Norwich in town meeting assembled, desire to give formal expression of our esteem for the deceased, it is hereby

“*Resolved*, that in the private walks of life General Lewis was a living example of a worthy and upright citizen, and in official life a true and tried public servant of unblemished integrity, and further

“*Resolved*, that these resolutions be placed upon the public records of the town.”

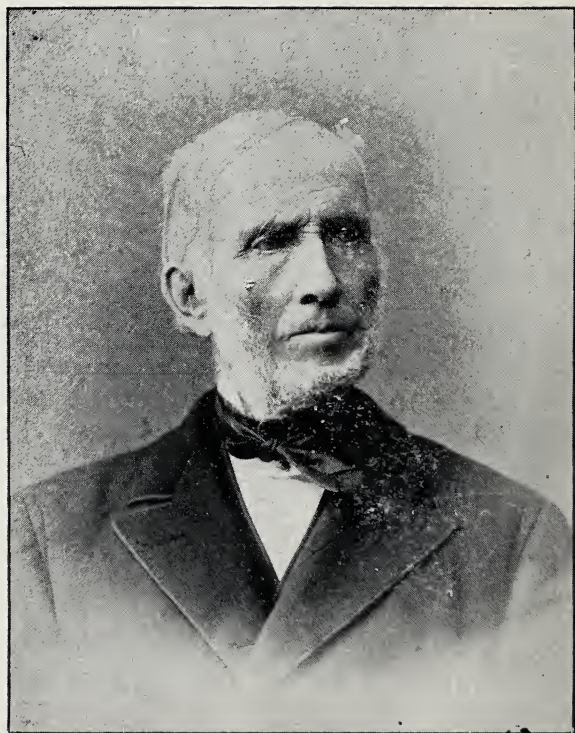
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THE LORD FAMILY

Jonathan, Jr., and David Lord, the first of the name to locate in Norwich, came from Colchester, Conn., (in what year is not definitely







COL. WM. E. LEWIS

known, probably about 1773). They were two of several children born to Jonathan and Ruth Lord of that place.

Jonathan, Jr., was born February 17, 1752; was a voter in Norwich in 1784. He married, in October, 1782, Mary Smith, and their children were: Porter, Russell, John, Polly, Lydia, John Proctor and Rachel.

Mr. Lord died at Norwich February 27, 1821.

David Lord was born at Colchester August 4, 1756, and died at Norwich January 25, 1803. He married Hannah Hanks, by whom he had eight children: Asa, born in Norwich, October 14, 1783, married (first) Ruth Howe, and their children were, Ira, who died in Thetford, Vt.; Lyman (deceased); Abigail (deceased), married William Cummings; Laura (deceased), married Tarbell Senter; Gideon, born in Norwich, Sept. 8, 1814, and died here Apr. 9, 1898, married Belisant Clough; Amasa C., removed to Illinois, after graduating from Dartmouth College in 1843, and died at Somonauk, that state; Laura (deceased), married Jonathan S. Lord; Mills A., married Livia Seaver of Norwich, daughter of Captain Calvin Seaver. Asa Lord married (second) Amelia Root of Norwich, and their children were, Frances Amelia, Abel, Emma A., M. Ellen, William, Henry and Persis.

John (son of Jonathan, Jr.) was born in Norwich, August 1, 1782, and died in town June 19, 1882. He married Lucy Bliss, to whom were born David Bliss (died in Norwich); Jonathan Smith (deceased), Lucius Stebbins; John Mills, a Congregational clergyman at Weymouth, Mass.; Harriet A., who married John Dutton; Lucy Isabella, widow of Augustus Chandler; and Horatio and Albinus.

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## LOVELAND FAMILY

### *Miss Mary A. Loveland*

One of the farms in Norwich still (1904) owned and occupied by descendants bearing the name of the original settlers, belongs in the Loveland family.

Joseph Loveland was born in 1747, in Connecticut; moving from that state to Dartmouth College, Hanover township, N. H., where he

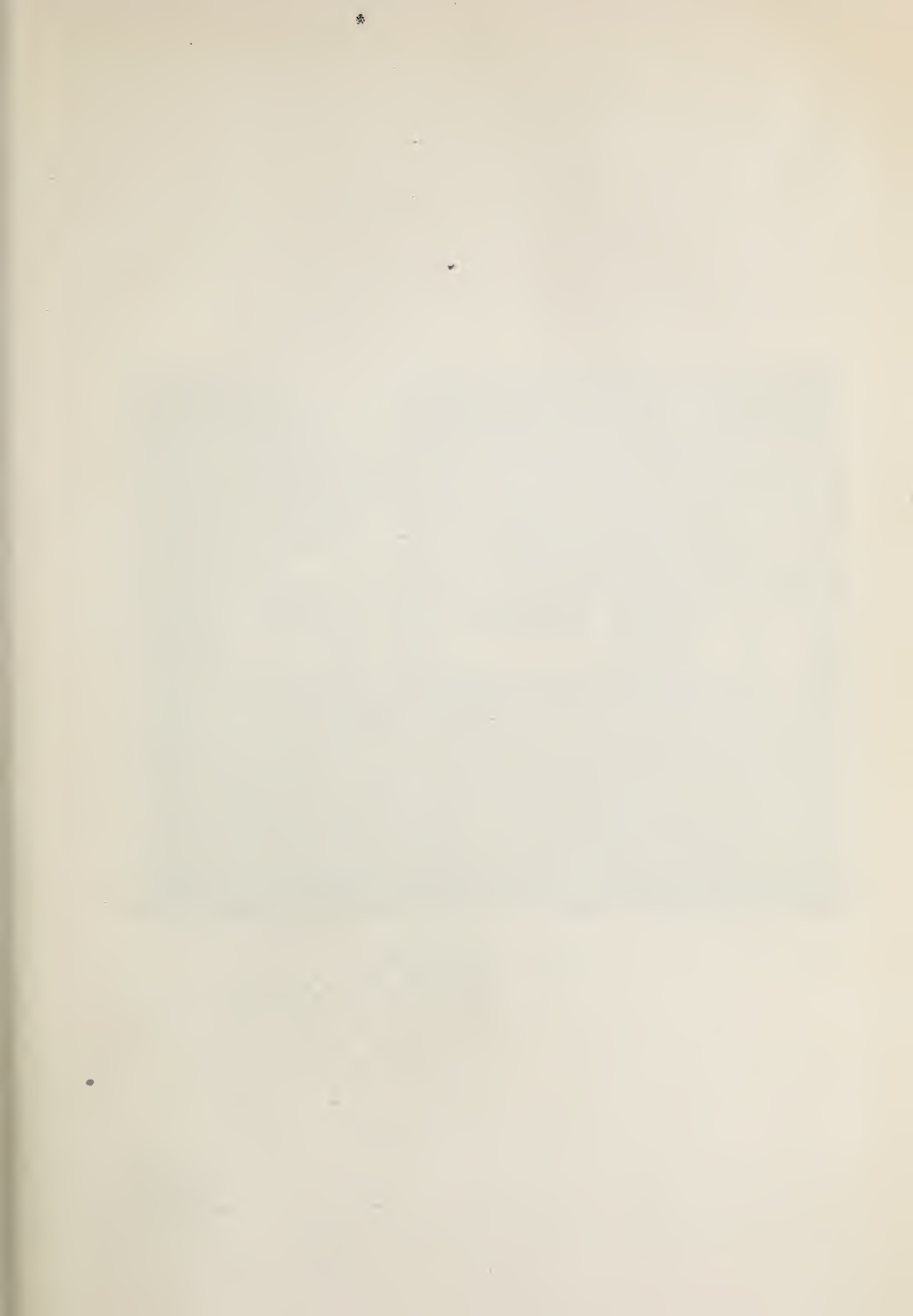
enlisted to reinforce the Continental Army at Ticonderoga. In 1779 he settled on a now fertile farm, about a mile and a half from Norwich village, building a home a little off the river road. Ten of his thirteen children were born in town, and six of them made, during most of their lives, their native place their home; dying, with one exception, in the town, at an average age of seventy-two years.

Aaron, one of Joseph's older sons, familiarly known as "The Judge," graduated at Dartmouth in the same class as Daniel Webster, with whom he roomed during part of his college course. Being the best Greek scholar of his class, he had an oration in that language at Commencement. Though a lawyer he lived the life of a recluse; he was ever a conservator of the peace rather than an instigator of litigation. He represented Norwich several times in the legislature, and was Chief Judge of Windsor County court in 1823. He died in 1870, at the advanced age of eighty-nine years.

David Loveland, the next younger brother of Aaron, made farming his chief business, at which he worked early and late, with good success. A few years before his death, in 1828, he built a new house on his river farm, about three miles from the village. As his fatherless sons grew up the land was divided, George (1816-1889) building another house, where his son Edward still lives. In that home five children were brought up to be useful members of society, and there he and his wife (Ruby Hatch) celebrated their golden wedding. Besides careful attention to farming, he found time to do work, both in and out of office, in the interests of the community.

John Wheatley Loveland, David's youngest son, for nearly seventy-seven years lived in the house where he was born, and there he died in 1901. He began to farm for himself at the age of seventeen, supplementing a limited education by study and reading at home. He did much business for others and was regarded a safe counselor. For forty years or more he served the town in some capacity as an officer, being twice elected to the legislature, and was of especial service as selectman and recruiting officer during the Civil War.

William Loveland, the fifth son of Joseph, succeeded his father on the original homestead, and was called "the model farmer." He was interested in natural history and was considered an authority on animals, birds and flowers. He, too, labored in behalf of the town both







LOVELAND HOMESTEAD  
BUILT BY JOSEPH LOVELAND IN 1792

at home and in the legislature. His oldest son, Joseph Talcott, kept up the old home until his death in 1889, at the age of seventy-one. Some one said of him: "He exemplified in his career and life the best type of that class of American citizens following agricultural pursuits." Of strict integrity, he was honored with trusts, both public and private, including four elections to the legislature. His brother Aaron had been, for some years before Joseph's death, associated with him on the home farm, and he now lives in the big, old house, while his son, Joseph H., occupies another house on half the original farm.

David A. Loveland (1839-1898), eldest son of George, though having for some years business elsewhere, always made Norwich his home and was elected to various town offices. He represented the town in the legislature and was later a senator from Windsor county.

The Lovelands were by inheritance Federalists—then Whigs, then Republicans. They have been attendants and supporters of the Congregational churches, and more than twenty bearing the name have been at some time members of the village church. While being in this region, in the main, true to their name, and lovers of country life and its labors, there have not been wanting members of the learned professions in the family, particularly among those who have gone away to seek their fortunes elsewhere. Four lawyers of the name were born here, and several have been teachers for a longer or shorter time.

Some of Joseph the First's descendants may be found in many states, and following various lines of business, and different professions.

At this writing, there are only eight who bear the name of Loveland, in town, though five homes are kept up by members of the family, and a considerable number reside here, who from their ancestry are entitled to a place in the genealogy.

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## THE MESSENGER FAMILY

Nathan and Nathaniel Messenger were in Norwich at an early day, the former as early as 1765, at which date he built his cabin in the meadow a little south and west of the Norwich terminus of the bridge leading to Hanover, N. H.

It was from this primitive home that Mrs. Messenger heard the welcome cry of the baby member of the Hutchinson family as they were about to cross the river to enter the land of promise on the Norwich side of the stream.

Soon after 1766 (in which year he was a voter in town) Mr. Messenger disappeared—having been drowned in the river, it is thought.

Nathaniel Messenger was a soldier in the Revolutionary war, serving in a New Hampshire organization, and thereafter resided in Norwich until about 1805, when he deserted his family and went to the State of New York, where he again married. His home in Norwich was in the Pompanoosuc section of the town, where, so we are informed by one of his great-grandsons, he was in trade, and built a large frame house on the road to Thetford.

What the relationship was, if any existed, between Nathan and Nathaniel Messenger, is not known to us.

Oliver Messenger, a son of Nathaniel, married, in 1803, Charlotte Smith, and they had two sons, Erastus and Nelson. Erastus lived for many years in the Hatch house, built in 1773, and there raised a large family of children, of whom are Norwich's present town clerk and treasurer, George Messenger, and Charles and Nelson, residing in New Hampshire.

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### THE THOMAS MURDOCK FAMILY.

Hon. Thomas Murdock removed to Norwich from Preston, Conn., as early as 1767 (in which year he was recorded a voter in town), and located on the farm a little north of Norwich Plain and subsequently occupied by Jared Goodell, George Blanchard, Harvey Knights, and now by Judd Leonard. He married Elizabeth Hatch (sister of John and Joseph Hatch, early settlers in Norwich), to whom were born: Asahel, Constant, Jasper, Thomas, Jr., Anna, who became the wife of Ebenezer Brown, Esq., the first lawyer to locate in Norwich, and Margaret, who married Elisha Partridge, November 14, 1765.

Mr. Murdock was prominent in both state and local matters, the offices held by him being noticed in other chapters of this book. He died Dec. 5, 1803, followed by his wife in 1814.

Asahel, the eldest son, was a voter in Norwich as early as 1782. He married Elizabeth Starkweather in 1779, and they became the parents of six children. He returned to Connecticut in 1800.

Constant was a voter in Norwich as early as 1784. By his first wife, Sarah Jewett, he had one child, and by his second wife, Lucy Riley, he had eight children. His home was in the fine residence now occupied by Albert Davis—on the hill a little north of Norwich village. He died in Norwich in 1828, aged 67 years. His first wife died in 1790, aged 22 years, and his second wife in 1825, aged 48 years.

Jasper was born October 5, 1759. It is likely that he came to Norwich with his father. He erected at Norwich Plain an elegant private residence (said to have been one of the finest, at that time, in the state), with large and attractive grounds, in which were a fish pond, where Charles E. Ensworth's barn stands, and a flower garden that occupied a large part of Mr. Ensworth's dooryard. (Mr. Ensworth's mother, who lived in those days, told her son the tale of the fish pond and the flower garden, and it is from him we get the story.) The water to supply the pond was conveyed in bored logs from a spring a little east of the creamery at the north part of the village. Several years since, while Mr. J. S. Currier was digging a ditch on his premises, he came across some of the logs, which were then in a fair state of preservation.

Mr. Murdock's enclosure included the present premises of Mr. Ensworth and Dr. Bowles, and extended westerly far enough to take in the premises where Mrs. Burton and Mrs. Norton reside, and, perhaps, the Armstrong meadow.

Attached to the main body of the house were two wings, the south one, (after its removal to its present site, where it is the residence of Charles E. Ensworth) became the abiding place of Judge Aaron Loveland, and in the north one Charles Hutchins kept store. At a later period the north wing was the family home of James S. Currier until its destruction, by fire, Dec. 29, 1889, which conflagration consumed the adjoining main part of the Murdock mansion (then owned by Dr. W. S. Bowles) and the abutting brick building on the south, erected by John Wright, Esq., in 1828.



At one time Dr. Ira Davis kept the post office in the south room of the Currier house, and in the room on the floor over the post office, Captain Alden Partridge was robbed, about 1824, of about \$1,700 by one Crowningshield, a cadet at the military school.

Mr. Murdock married (first) Sarah Olcott, in 1786, by whom he had one child, and (second), Margaret Olcott, daughters of Hon. Peter Olcott. For his third wife he married Martha, daughter of Rev. Lyman Potter. Himself and family, with Mr. Potter and his family, removed to Ohio in 1801, and there he died in 1803.

The house where Joseph Simoneau lives was Mr. Murdock's barn, and was sold to Col. James Dana, who moved it to its present location and converted it into a dwelling.

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### DEACON ISRAEL NEWTON

The inventor of the well known medical preparations widely known as "Newton's Bitters," "Newton's Pills," &c., and sold extensively for many years throughout New England and New York, died here in Norwich in January, 1856, seventy-three years of age.

Doctor Newton was a thoroughly educated physician, though not in general practice of his profession, and was much respected as a man and a citizen. Besides his medicines, which were valuable, he invented and built a church organ, which was placed in the old first church and was there used for many years.\* He was gifted with rare mechanical skill, which he exhibited in many ways to the benefit of mankind. His name and memory deserve this passing word.

Doctor Newton held many town offices, and in 1814 represented the town in the general assembly.

He was a prominent member of the Congregational church, of which he was one of the deacons for about twenty-five years, beginning in 1812. He was a soldier of the Revolution, and the last of those soldiers to die in Norwich.

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\*At a town meeting held at Norwich, March 25, 1814, it was "Voted that the town is willing to have an organ put into the meeting house."







REV. N. R. NICHOLS

## REV. N. R. NICHOLS

Whose likeness faces this page, was pastor of the Congregational church at Norwich village from February, 1880, to May, 1904, after completing a seven years' pastorate at Barnet, Vt., which was preceded by brief pastorates at Westfield, Mass., and Acworth, N. H. During his term of nearly a quarter of a century here in Norwich, Mr. Nichols faithfully cared for the interests committed to his charge, as the one hundred and ninety-five accessions to his church during his pastorate amply indicate.

Not alone to matters connected with his church did he give his attention, but, as well, to those of a temporal character; elevated pleasures, as he viewed them from his conscientious standpoint, were recipients of his countenance and active aid.

For many years Mr. Nichols was one of the trustees of the Norwich public library, in which institution he had a deep interest, and at the front entrance to the library building he caused a pretty door to be placed in memory of his deceased wife.

It may be appropriate to place at the conclusion of this short sketch of the late pastor a few words from the presentation address accompanying a gift of silver coin to Mr. Nichols on the twenty-fifth anniversary of his marriage:

"We love and honor you for the life you have lived among us and for the good you have accomplished."

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HON. PETER OLCOTT

Mr. Olcott was born at Bolton, Conn., April 25, 1733; married Sarah, daughter of Peletiah Mills, Esq., of Windsor, Conn., October 11, 1759, and removed to that place in 1772. That year or the following one he came to Norwich, Vt.

He was the oldest of his parents' four children (two sons and two daughters), and the only one of them to come to Norwich to reside.

Mr. Olcott's name first appears in the town records of Norwich in 1773, when he was chosen one of the overseers of the poor, at the annual March meeting. He early took a leading part in public affairs

in his new home. He was elected to the most important town offices, and soon came to be regarded as one of the leading men of the place.

It is probable that he was a man of considerable means when he came to Norwich, which, united with his superior talents, gave him a commanding influence in the community. The next year (1774) the annual town meeting was held at his house, and such meetings continued to be so held until 1779, after which they were held at the meeting house, except in severe winter weather.

Probably his influence was potent in fixing the location of the first meeting house very near to his residence and upon land which he gave for a site. He also gave the land for the old burying ground adjoining.

Mr. Olcott was the first justice of the peace in town, being chosen to that office at a special town meeting called for that purpose April 7, 1778. In 1777 he was colonel of the militia, and was summoned to Bennington with half of his regiment by the Vermont Council of Safety sitting at that place, a few days previous to the battle there August 16, 1777, but not soon enough to participate in it. He was engaged with the American Army in the operations that resulted in the surrender of Burgoyne.

The following offices were held by Mr. Olcott: Judge of County Court, 1781; Lieutenant Governor of the state, 1790-91-92 and 1793; Councillor, 1778-81 to 1791; Representative in the General Assembly, 1778 and 1801; Commissioner of Sequestration of Tory property, 1777; Colonel of the Fourth Regiment of Vermont Militia, 1776 to 1781; Brigadier General, Third Brigade in the same service, 1781 to 1788; and Trustee of Dartmouth College, 1788 to 1808.

He died at the home of his son, Mills Olcott, at Hanover, N. H., September 12, 1808, aged seventy-five years.

His children were Pelatiah Mills, born October 19, 1762, and died March 30, 1773.

Peter, Jr., born April 16, 1764, and died March 9, 1773.

Timothy, born June 29, 1766, and died in 1799, at Charleston, S. C., buried at Norwich.

Roswell O., April 11, 1768, and died in Broome, Canada, June 24, 1841.

Sarah, born December 9, 1769, married Colonel Jasper Murdock, January 18, 1786, and died July 13, 1788, leaving an infant child.

Sarah Jane, born June 5, of the same year, who became the wife of Honorable George Blake of Boston, Mass., June 25, 1810. Mrs. Blake died in 1825 or 1826.

Margaret, baptized May 17, 1772, became Jasper Murdock's second wife. She died without issue April 25, 1796.

Mills, born at Norwich May 21, 1774, married Sarah, daughter of Colonel Asa Porter of Haverhill, N. H., December 15, 1800; settled at Hanover, N. H., as a lawyer in 1800, and died there July 11, 1845.

Martha, born at Norwich September 25, 1779, married Benjamin Porter, a son of Colonel Asa Porter of Newbury, Vt., October 26, 1800, and had eight children. She died at Hanover, N. H., May 4, 1825.

Governor Olcott was of direct descent from Thomas Olcott, the progenitor of the family in this country, who was among the earliest settlers in Hartford, Conn., to which place he removed about 1635, from near Cambridge, Mass., and there engaged in mercantile pursuits. His wife's maiden name was Porter. Thomas Olcott died in 1654, aged forty-five years.

Deacon Timothy Olcott (born in 1677), a great-grandson of Thomas Olcott, lived in Bolton, Conn., and his son Titus was born there in 1705. The latter married Damaris Marshall (widow) October 5, 1731, and died October 9, 1774. He was the father of Peter Olcott, the subject of this sketch.

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## THE PARTRIDGE FAMILY

Samuel Partridge, Sr., was born in Preston, Conn., in 1721. He married Ruth Woodward, and with her and seven of their children (one son remaining in Connecticut to care for the "old folks") came to Norwich for a permanent settlement about 1765, and settled on a hill farm about one mile west from Norwich village, which farm remained in the possession of the Partridge family for three generations, until sold by the representatives of the estate of Abel Partridge, of the third generation, to the late Deacon John Dutton, who demolished the old mansion. The farm is now owned by the widow of the late Ambrose Currier.



By a commission issued by his "Excellency, Henry Moore, Baronet, Captain General and Governor-in-Chief in and over the Province of New York," etc., bearing date, the 30th September, 1776, Mr. Partridge was made a lieutenant in the "Regiment of Militia Foot, to consist of the Inhabitants of Norwich in the County of Cumberland, in the Province of New York."

Mr. Partridge died in Norwich Aug. 24, 1826, aged eighty-five years, and his wife passed away April 29, 1786, in the sixty-seventh year of her age. To them were born:

Elisha, who married Margaret, a daughter of Mr. Thomas Murdock, Nov. 14, 1765.

Samuel, Jr., married Elizabeth Wright, daughter of Aaron and Elizabeth (Bliss) Wright, Dec. 6, 1770.

Isaac, who married Lois Newton, Nov. 3, 1785.

Elias, who married Sarah Brown, Dec. 31, 1788.

Reuben, who remained in Connecticut to care for the "old folks."

Ephraim, who never married; was made a prisoner by the enemy during the Revolutionary war and died in captivity in Canada.

Olive, who married John Wright, son of Aaron and Elizabeth (Bliss) Wright, Sept. 27, 1768.

Ruth, who married Peter Branch.

Elisha, Isaac, Samuel, Jr., and Ephraim were soldiers in the Revolutionary war.

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### CAPT. ALDEN PARTRIDGE

The subject of this sketch was the second son of Samuel, Jr., and Elizabeth (Wright) Partridge, and was born at Norwich, Feb. 12, 1785, on the farm where his father and grandfather located when they came to this town.

He remained at home, doing the work that fell to the lot of the sons of New England farmers in those days, until he entered Dartmouth College in 1802. He continued his course in college until 1805, when he entered the U. S. Military Academy at West Point, being the first person from his native town to enter that institution. After his grad-





CAPTAIN ALDEN PARTRIDGE  
ABOUT 54 YEARS OF AGE



CAPTAIN ALDEN PARTRIDGE  
WHEN AT U. S. MIL. ACAD., WEST POINT

uation at the academy he filled many positions on the academic staff there, besides being superintendent of the academy at different times. In 1817 he resigned his commission of captain in the corps of engineers.

Captain Partridge was chief of the American party in running a northeastern boundary, in 1819, between this country and Canada, under the Fifth Article of the Treaty of Ghent; Surveyor General of Vermont, 1823; represented his native town in the legislature in 1833, 1834, 1837, and 1839; three times his party's candidate for Congress, but unsuccessful, as the district was largely of a different political coloring. In 1812, Dartmouth College conferred upon him the honorary degree of A. M., and the University of Vermont did likewise in 1821, it being the only honorary degree conferred by that corporation that year. In the same year the Presidency of that institution was offered him, only to be declined by him.

Captain Partridge was a noted pedestrian, on several occasions walking sixty miles a day, and once pacing off seventy miles within that limit. Once when returning to his home from an excursion to Fort Ticonderoga, and other points of historic interest in that vicinity, he averaged fifty-four miles daily for three consecutive days, crossing the Green Mountains and carrying his knapsack and barometer (his inseparable companions on all his pedestrian excursions).

It has been said of him by one who knew him well in his youth, that he was never known to utter a vulgar or profane word, or a by-word, or to use tobacco in any form. Such he was through life, and a most constant attendant upon Sabbath services.

In 1837, Capt. Partridge married Ann Elizabeth Swasey, daughter of John Swasey, a merchant of Claremont, N. H., and to them were born two sons, George M. C. and Henry V., the former passing away May 12, 1855.

After a short illness, Captain Partridge died, January 16, 1854, in the sixty-ninth year of his age, followed by his widow. Oct. 11, 1902, in her ninety-second year,

## CAPTAIN PARTRIDGE AS AN EDUCATOR

The influence of Captain Partridge in this direction was important and far reaching. He was one of the first to point out the vices and defects of the higher education of his time. It is a well-known fact that the physical development of the literary and student class has been improved within the last half century. Captain Partridge wrought out in his own mind a scheme of education, mental, moral, and physical, that was thoroughly practical and American. He then set himself to establish schools wherein his ideas could be carried into operation. These schools proved a great success, and in them were trained many young men whose services to the country have proved to be of the highest value. His capital maxim in education was, *mens sana in corpore sano*—a sound mind in a sound body. In his system of education he combined the physical training of the Old Greeks with the ardent patriotism of the Old Romans, and added thereto other elements original with himself, and then Americanized and modernized the whole. His contribution to modern education was important, and for his labors in this direction, Captain Partridge well deserves the gratitude of his countrymen and of posterity. We have lived to see the defects of a college education as pointed out by Captain Partridge two generations ago in a large measure corrected. The gymnasium is now an essential part of every well-appointed institution of learning. Manly sports and games everywhere receive large and constant attention.

A wide option of elective studies is now offered to every college student in place of the old inflexible curriculum of strictly scholastic training. Industrial education is everywhere coming into use. The natural and political sciences are assiduously cultivated with largely endowed professional chairs in all the universities, and every facility given for acquiring a practical education.

Indeed it is doubtful if the idea of the Agricultural College was not original with Captain Partridge rather than with our Vermont Senator. From a lecture given by Captain Partridge before the establishment of his Military Academy at Norwich, in 1820, I quote the following: "In a country like ours, which is emphatically agricultural, I presume it will not be doubted that a practical, scientific



knowledge of agriculture would constitute an important appendage to the education of every American citizen. Indeed the most certain mode of improving the agriculture of the country will be to make it a branch of elementary education. By these means it will not only be improved, but a knowledge of improvements generally disseminated among the great mass of the people . . . ” After outlining a suitable course of advanced studies, he adds: “To the institution should be attached a range of mechanic shops, where those who possess an aptitude and inclination might occasionally employ a leisure hour in learning the use of tools and the knowledge of some useful mechanic art.”

What is this but Mr. Morrill's College of Agriculture and Mechanic Arts antedated by forty years?

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General Lewis S. Partridge, son of Abel and Alpa (Lewis) Partridge, was born in Norwich, Vt., in 1818, a year prolific in the birth of sons in town.

In early life he served in clerkships in mercantile business in Norwich, and in Hanover and Claremont, N. H. He became a cadet at Norwich University in 1833, remaining there until 1836. Later on he entered into mercantile business on his own account in his native town. He was at one time proprietor of the “Union Hotel,” at Norwich. From early life Mr. Partridge took an active part in politics and was a prominent factor in his political party, both in town and State. He represented his town in the General Assembly in 1852 and the following year; was Adjutant General of Vermont, 1852-1854; postmaster at Norwich, 1833, 1861, and 1885; delegate to the Democratic National Convention of 1854.

He married (first) Harriet Baxter (youngest child of Ira Baxter, of Norwich), June 16, 1846. They had three children. He married (second) Elizabeth Woodruff of Tinmouth, Vt., and to them were born six children, now living, all of whom and their mother reside at Manchester, N. H.

General Partridge was a man of fine physique and pleasing address. He died at Norwich, May 22, 1885.

## REVEREND LYMAN POTTER

Was born at Salisbury, Conn.; graduated at Yale College in 1772, and three years later (August 31, 1775) was settled over the Congregational Church at Norwich, Vt. As the first settled minister in town he received the grant of land provided in all the New Hampshire town charters for this purpose. This consisted of between three hundred and four hundred acres. Upon this land, then presumably a wilderness, Mr. Potter at once began to carve out a farm and a home. The location of his home was pleasant, it being the present farm of Mr. Stillman Armstrong, still familiarly called the "Potter place." About one year subsequent to his settlement in Norwich, Mr. Potter married (September 1, 1776) Abigail Payne, daughter of Colonel Elisha Payne of Lebanon, N. H. The fruits of this marriage were nine children, three sons and six daughters, born in town. The ministry of Mr. Potter covers a period of twenty-six years (1775-1801). After the year 1783, his salary, which was usually £75, was raised by direct tax upon the polls and rateable estate of all the taxpayers in town, and collected by a special officer chosen for that purpose in town meeting. This tax was called the "priest rate" and was rigidly enforced against all who did not produce a written certificate from the minister or clerk of some other religious sect setting forth the fact of their membership in such sect or denomination.

The professional labors of the first minister, it is believed, were generally acceptable to the townspeople. He preached long expository sermons, made long prayers, and used many long metric hymns in his services. He dressed in the clerical garb of his day with loose and flowing coatskirts, powdered hair, and wore a three-cornered cocked hat of the continental pattern. Being a man of large size and commanding appearance, he was an object of considerable awe, especially to children and young people, who on his coming into their presence were expected to show especial attention and courtesies, which he would reward with a pleasant smile and a few kindly words. He is said to have been very punctual in visiting the schools and catechising the children.

Aside from his professional duties, Mr. Potter was a practical and successful farmer and a thrifty manager of property. He reared a

large family of children, two of his sons receiving a collegiate education at Dartmouth College, where one (Lyman Potter, Jr.) graduated in 1799, the other in 1802.

In the capacity of chaplain, he accompanied the regiment or half regiment of militia that was called out to meet the invasion of Burgoyne's army in the autumn of 1777, from this and neighboring towns. On the convening of the Vermont legislature at Norwich in June, 1785, the "election sermon," as it was called, was preached by Mr. Potter, as also at Newbury on a similar occasion in the fall of 1787. In his pulpit efforts he does not appear to have been especially happy, his delivery being marred by a slight impediment in speech, and by a harsh, shrill voice. He was, however, considered a man of strong mind, and won the respect and affection of his parishioners, from whom he received many tokens of their regard. Toward the last of his ministry, it is hinted that he allowed his farming and his family and secular affairs to encroach too much upon his time, to the neglect of spiritual duties. However that may be, at the annual town meeting in March, 1801, Mr. Potter resigned his office and requested a dismissal, which, after reference to a committee consisting of Governor Brigham, Elisha Burton, and Governor Olcott, and after due negotiations, was readily granted and the official connection of the town with its first minister was formally severed in July following.

During the same year, Mr. Potter and family, with the family of Colonel Jasper Murdock, who had married Martha Potter the February preceding, removed from town and performed the long and laborious journey to the Connecticut lands of northeastern Ohio, then a part of the Northwestern Territory and since known as the Western Reserve. Thither one of his sons had already preceded him, and there Colonel Murdock was already engaged in extensive land speculations. But little has been gathered concerning the later history of the Potter family in their new home, where they must have encountered afresh the hardships of a pioneer life in a new country. Colonel Murdock, who was undoubtedly the leading spirit in effecting their removal, died early in 1803. Of the two sons who graduated at Dartmouth, Lyman Potter, Jr., settled as a farmer in Trumbull County, Ohio; Elderkin Potter was a successful lawyer in New Lisbon, Columbiana County, Ohio. Both were subsequently members of the Ohio legislature. Mr. Pot-

ter continued to preach to some extent, but did not afterwards have a permanent settlement. He died at Steubenville, Ohio, in 1826, at the ripe age of eighty years. He received the degree of A. M. from Dartmouth College in 1780, and was elected one of the trustees of that institution in 1800. He was brother of Reverend Isaiah Potter, settled over the church in Lebanon, N. H.

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### THE RICHARDS FAMILY

Jonas Richards, born at Killingly, Conn., in 1744, married Hannah Wheeler of Plainfield, that state, and settled in Norwich in 1767.

He was one of the pioneer settlers of the town, locating on the farm lately owned by Rufus Cloud, on the hill northwest of Norwich village. He became an enterprising and thrifty farmer.

He was one of the early members of the Congregational church and a man of stern Puritan morality.

He had a family of seven children, the eldest of whom, Joel Richards, born Nov. 26, 1767, was the second male child born in Norwich, according to the Richards Genealogy.

He married Merian Smith, of Hartford, Vt., in which town (in the Jericho neighborhood) he settled in early life, and there raised a large family of children, among them Cyrus Richards, A. M., for many years the well known principal of Meriden Academy, and the Rev. DeForest Richards.

Mr. Jonas Richards died in 1800, at the age of fifty-six years, and his wife died in 1826, aged eighty-seven years.

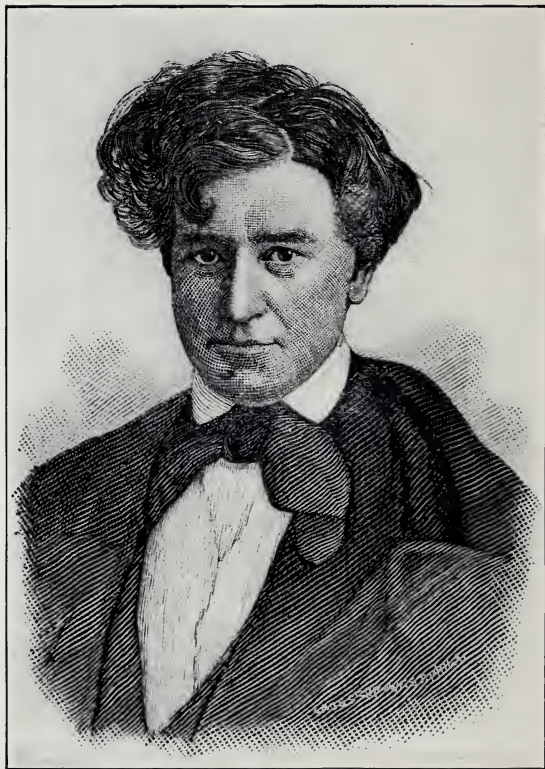
One of his sisters married (at Preston, Conn., in 1748) John Hatch, Esq., one of the early settlers in Norwich.

Three other sons of Jonas Richards early removed from town. Wheeler settled on a farm in Derby, Vt., but afterwards removed to Ohio. Alvin went west early in life in quest of his fortune, and was never after heard from. Bela lived and died a farmer at Benton, N. Y. He married Sarah Slade of Hanover, N. H.

Levi, born July 15, 1777, inherited the paternal home and passed his life in Norwich, where he raised quite a large family, and here he died in 1846, aged sixty-nine years.







COL. TRUMAN B. RANSOM

All these sons of Jonas Richards, like their father, were large, athletic men, remarkable for great physical strength and power of endurance. Levi, especially, was princely in form and appearance, and was said to be the strongest man in Norwich in his day.

They were also highly respected for their intelligence, integrity and purity.

Levi's son, Harry, entered Dartmouth College, but did not graduate.

He settled as a mechanic in Norwich; was a great reader, and much esteemed as a citizen, holding important town offices. He died at the age of thirty-five years.

Chandler, another son of Levi Richards, graduated at Dartmouth College, 1855; studied law, went to Wisconsin and died there.

Sarah Helen, daughter of Levi, married Rev. Thomas Hall, in 1852, as his second wife.

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### TRUMAN BISHOP RANSOM

Truman Bishop Ransom was born in Woodstock, Vt., December, 1802. He was the son of Amasa Ransom, and was named after a Methodist minister, Truman Bishop. His mother's maiden name was Root. But little is known of his early life. His father died when he was but ten years old, leaving him no patrimony, but superior natural abilities, an ardent, hopeful temperament, and great ambition.

Young Ransom obtained by his unaided efforts a good academical education. He became a cadet at the A. L. S. & M. Academy at Norwich, in 1820, and there found a friend and benefactor in the person of Capt. Alden Partridge.

Completing a course of scientific and liberal studies at Norwich, where he imbibed in full measure the military spirit and enthusiasm of his preceptor, he was for several years employed as teacher of mathematics and military science in different military schools in Connecticut, New Jersey, and Fayetteville, N. C., and finally as professor of mathematics in the U. S. Navy. When Norwich University was established in 1835, under the Presidency of Captain Partridge, Ransom

was elected vice-president, and upon Captain Partridge resigning his position in the institution Colonel Ransom became his successor.

Colonel Ransom took much interest in the State militia, and in 1836 he was made General of Division and re-elected to that office until 1844. He was the candidate of the Democratic party for Congress in 1840, and for Lieutenant Governor in 1846. He was commissioned Colonel of the Ninth U. S. Infantry, soon to start for the theatre of war in Mexico.

In his campaigning in Mexico Colonel Ransom proved himself a gallant officer, and while leading his command he was killed at the storming of Chapultepec, Sept. 13, 1847.

The following touching and appropriate lines were written by J. H. Warland, of New Hampshire, a member of Colonel Ransom's military staff, shortly after the Colonel's death:

#### RANSOM

He fell as the hero falls,  
With his good sword by his side,  
As he led the way through the thick of the fray,  
In all a warrior's pride.

\* \* \* \*

And his be the hero's fame!  
It shall ring o'er land and sea;  
As the hills that rise in his native skies,  
Ever-green his name shall be.

He died as the hero dies,  
On the field his sword hath won,  
'Mid the cannon's flame and the shot that came  
Like hail from the deadly gun.

Col. Ransom's body was placed in a leaden coffin and temporarily interred in the Protestant burying ground near the city of Mexico. During the following winter it was removed and brought back to his home in Vermont, where it was consigned to its final resting place in the old cemetery at Norwich village, on the 22d day of February, 1848.

The day was the occasion for a public funeral attended by many leading men of his own and adjoining states, and by a concourse of citizens, larger, probably, than had ever before been assembled in Norwich on any occasion. Rev. J. D. Butler, of Wells River, preached the funeral discourse, which was followed by a brief eulogy (afterwards printed) by F. W. Hopkins, Adj.-Gen. of Vermont.

The remains were then consigned to the grave with appropriate

military honors: two companies of light infantry from Hanover and Lebanon, N. H., with a brass band from Claremont, and the West Fairlee Rifle Corps, besides the Norwich Company, forming the escort; the whole under the command of Gen. W. E. Lewis of Norwich.

Col. Ransom married, about 1830, Margaret M. Greenfield, of Middletown, Conn., to whom were born seven children, three of them dying when quite young. Dunbar R. Ransom (his eldest son) was a cadet at the U. S. Military Academy, and served with distinction in the army during the late Civil War, being brevetted several times for gallant and meritorious service in the field. He left the army in 1872, and for several years was in the employ of the Southern Pacific Railroad Company. He died at Fort Worth, Texas, July 11, 1897. Other children were Thomas Edward Greenfield, Frederick Eugene, the youngest son, and Catharine Harriet, who married James O'Hara, U. S. A., and became the mother of a large family of children. She passed away within the present year, leaving her brother, Frederick Eugene, the sole survivor of Col. Ransom's family.

The following action by the Legislature of Vermont was taken at the session of that body in the fall of 1848:

*“Resolved, by the Senate and House of Representatives,*

*“That in the recent death of Col. Truman B. Ransom, who fell while gallantly leading his men at the storming of the heights of Chapultepec, in Mexico, on the 13th of September last, the State of Vermont is called to deplore the loss of one of her best citizens, and one of her most brave and accomplished soldiers.*

*“Resolved, that the firmness and brave bearing displayed by Col. Ransom in the several battles in which he participated, which have been recently fought between the American and Mexican troops near the walls of the City of Mexico, will not only perpetuate forever his own memory, but will impart a deeper and more abiding lustre to the already well earned martial fame of his native state.*

*“Resolved, that his Excellency, the Governor, as a token of the respect of the General Assembly of this State for the memory of Colonel Ransom, is hereby authorized and empowered to present at such time and manner as he may deem proper, to the son of Colonel Ransom, now a cadet at West Point, an appropriate sword, with such devices and inscriptions thereon as will best perpetuate the memory of the de-*



ceased, and most effectually awaken in the bosom of the son those sentiments of lofty and fervent patriotism for which the father was so eminently distinguished."

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### GENERAL 'THOMAS EDWARD GREENFIELD RANSOM

General Ransom was the second son of Colonel Truman Ransom, and was born in Norwich, November 29, 1834. He entered Norwich University in 1848, where he remained three years, then went to Illinois, where he practised his profession of civil engineering and entered into real estate transactions.

At the breaking out of the Civil War he was in the employ of the Illinois Central Railroad, with his residence in Fayette County, that State.

In response to President Lincoln's call for 75,000 troops in 1861, he raised a body of soldiers that became Company E of the Eleventh Illinois Volunteers, and was elected its Captain, his commission bearing date, April 6, 1861. He was commissioned Lieutenant Colonel of the regiment July 30, 1861, and Colonel of the same February 15, 1862. In January, 1863, he was appointed a Brigadier General and placed in command of a brigade in General Logan's division of the Seventeenth Army Corps.

General Ransom was severely wounded in the head during the battle of Shiloh, April 6, 1862; and received other wounds at Charleston, Mo.; at Fort Donelson, in 1862; and at Pleasant Hill, La. The last wound was a serious one and caused him to be brought to Chicago for care and treatment.

In the early part of October, 1864, General Ransom was taken severely ill with dysentery, while on active duty in the field. Al-

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NOTE—The sword was presented to Colonel Ransom's son by Colonel J. P. Kidder, of West Randolph, Vt., by request of the Governor.

It will be of interest to the people of Norwich, and of the state at large, to learn that the Ninth Regiment was not only commanded by Colonel Ransom, but at a later date by Gen. George Wright, a native born son of Norwich, [a notice of General Wright will be found under "Graduates of the U. S. Military Academy," in a previous chapter in this book], and still later by Colonel Liscomb, a Vermonter, who lost his life in China, when the allied forces were storming the walls around Peking.



though advised by surgeons and superior officers to go upon sick leave, he firmly refused to heed their advice, but continued with his command, and when too weak to ride on horseback he rode in an ambulance.

All this time the disease was making rapid progress towards a fatal termination, then near at hand. General Ransom died October 29, 1864. And thus passed away the young, brave, and handsome soldier, whose reply to friends when urged by them to leave his command, in search of health, was: "I will stay with my command until I am carried away in my coffin"; and when told that he had but a few hours to live, answered: "I am not afraid to die, I have met death too often to be afraid of it now."

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### THE SEAVER FAMILY

The first representatives of this family in Norwich were two brothers, Calvin and Nathaniel, who removed to town from Petersham, Mass., but in what year we have no record.

Capt. Nathaniel was a voter here as early as 1777.

He married Mary Bush and to them were born four children. Mr. Seaver removed from Norwich prior to 1806, since which time we have no record of him.

Captain Calvin appears as a voter in town in 1787. He married Molly Hovey in 1786, by whom he had seven children. He was frequently elected to offices in town. He died in 1841, aged eighty-two years, and his wife in 1857, aged ninety-three years.

Luther, son of Capt. Calvin Seaver, first voted in town in 1801. He died at New Orleans, La., in 1829.

Calvin Seaver, Jr., married for his first wife Cylinda Waterman, in 1809; and for his second wife, Sophia — (?). He died in 1853, aged sixty-six years, and his wife, Cylinda, in 1832, forty-five years of age.

Josiah Hillis Seaver was a son of Capt. Nathaniel Seaver. [A further record of him appears in the list of graduates of Dartmouth College, in another chapter.]

Otis, son of Captain Calvin, was born at Norwich, in 1801. He married Amanda Kimball, who died in 1871, aged sixty-six years. Mr. Seaver died in 1874, aged seventy-three years.

Polly Seaver married Dyer Waterman at Norwich in 1809, and four children were born to them.

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### SARGENT FAMILY

John Sargent, (progenitor), came to Norwich from Mansfield, Conn., He was a settler in Norwich as early as 1770: was chosen assessor in that year. He was a subscriber to the Dartmouth College fund, to which he contributed forty acres of land and £2 10s in money.

In December, 1778, Mr. Sargent lived in his house near the Ferry place leading to Dresden (now Hanover).

August 15, 1780, he was chosen one of a committee "to look into and adjust the amount of service performed in the war by all the able bodied men in town." Two days later, at an adjourned meeting, Mr. Nathaniel Brown was chosen in Mr. Sargent's place, it being found that the latter was absent from town.

Mr. Sargent was engaged in the lumber business upon the Connecticut river, but lost most of his property by a freshet, and by bad debts (by one Baxter), and returned to Mansfield before 1790.

He died at Pawlet or Dorset (?), Vt., in 1826, where he went in 1811 to live with his son, John, Jr.

In the summer of 1871 John Sargent, Jr., was on frontier service, being stationed in the town of Corinth, where a fort had been built by two companies under Captain Abner Seeley and Captain Nelson. On the 16th of October following he was on a scout in the town of Jericho near Winooski river, with four others from the fort. They were here fired upon by a party of tories, one of them being killed, and two wounded, including Mr. Sargent. Those not killed were taken prisoners and carried to Quebec, where they were kept until the next spring, when they were allowed to return home.

At a town meeting held November 19, 1782, it was "voted that John Sargent, Jr., be entitled to receive out of the town treasury his pay as a soldier from the time he enlisted until the time of the last

town meeting (September 20, 1782), and that the consideration of his other wages and the pay-roll laid in by Capt. Seeley, be proposed," etc.

Mr. Sargent married Delight Bell at Norwich, and they had ten children. He was a physician, and removed to Dorset or Pawlet (?), Vt., in 1786. He was the father of Honorable Leonard Sargent of Manchester, Vt., and of Doctor Warren B. Sargent of Pawlet, Vt.

Royal Sargent (supposed to be a son of John Sargent, Sr.) married Grace Benton, in 1775. He removed to Irasburg, Vt.

Elizabeth Sargent married Joel Benton, in 1785, and they had two sons.

Lois Sargent married Ebenezer Broughton, in 1786, and they had three children.

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### SAWYER FAMILY

The first of this name to come to Norwich, of whom we have any record, was Conant B. Sawyer (son of Isaac Sawyer), who removed here from Hebron, Conn., his native town, during the early years of the settlement of Norwich, for a temporary sojourn, then returned to Hebron, from which place he became a soldier during the War of the Revolution. We are unable to determine the year when Mr. Sawyer returned to Norwich for a permanent residence, but we find that he was in town as early as 1780.

Mr. Sawyer located in that part of the town known as Beaver Meadow (now West Norwich), on a farm subsequently owned by William Pixley, Captain Thomas Howard, and now by Chauncey Smith, except that part that came into the possession of his son Calvin, upon which the latter erected a dwelling, and there passed his days. He was born in 1756, and died in 1838. He had five wives: Deborah Robinson, Roxalana Miller, Ruth Boardman and Mary and Margaret McAllister, sisters. By Deborah Robinson he had two children, and by Ruth Boardman six, of whom Miss Harriet Sawyer, whose death occurred a few years since at the home of C. C. Sawyer, was one; the others were Calvin, already mentioned, Oramel, Milo, Almon, and Ruth.

Isaac Sawyer, the father of Conant, never came to Norwich, but soon after his death in Connecticut, his widow came here and lived in the family of Hon. Paul Brigham.

Jacob S. Sawyer removed to Norwich from Connecticut, in 1785, accompanied by his wife, Jemima, two sons, Western and Cornelius, and one daughter, Sally, six years old, who subsequently married Cephas Harding and resided in Pomfret, Vt. He settled upon a hill farm half a mile west of New Boston Schoolhouse, where he built himself a log house. The family baking was done in an oven of stone and clay erected on a ledge of rocks in rear of the house. In 1786, he planted seeds from two apples brought by him from Connecticut, from which are two trees now bearing fruit. He died in 1826, aged seventy-six years, and his wife, October 20, 1835, aged eighty-one years.

From any source of information at our command, we are unable to decide whether Conant and Jacob S. Sawyer were of the same family—at least, of near ties of consanguinity.

Western Sawyer, after arriving at man's estate, located on a farm about one mile north of New Boston Schoolhouse, and built a log house in which to reside. He removed to the State of Ohio, in 1825.

Cornelius and his wife (*nee* Alice Johnson) made their home on the farm where his father settled. He died February 20, 1860, aged seventy-six years, and his wife passed away May 23, 1852, aged sixty-seven years.

Their children were James, Milton, Ralph, Emeline, Alvira, and Arvilla.

To Calvin Sawyer and his wife (*nee* Fanny Hatch) were born eight children, among them C. C. Sawyer, now residing in Norwich.

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### THE STIMSON FAMILY

Joel Stimson, the progenitor of the Stimson family in Norwich, emigrated from Holland, Conn., during the Revolutionary War. He had previously served as a soldier from that town—a fifer in Captain Solomon Will's Company. He married Susanna Growe at Norwich, April 15, 1779. He settled on what is now the Danforth farm, on the



old Sharon road, and for many years kept a hotel there. Mr. Stimson raised a large family of sons and daughters and was a leading man in town and church. He was chosen tithingman as early as 1785. He died April 15, 1813, aged sixty-two. His eldest son, Seba Stimson, removed to Greensboro, Vt., when quite a young man. He was the father of Joel G. Stimson, who was born in Greensboro.

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### COLONEL ALBA STIMSON

Second son of Joel Stimson, was born at Norwich, May 10, 1783, and died at Post Mills, Vt., March 15, 1864. The greater part of his long life was passed in Norwich, of which he was for many years one of the most respected and influential citizens. He was early prominent in the militia, where he rose to the rank of Colonel, and in that capacity was in command of several companies and detachments that were assembled at Windsor in June, 1825, to welcome General Lafayette to Vermont. He is best remembered, perhaps, by the older townspeople as a school teacher in the district schools, an occupation for which he was singularly well adapted, both as regards the instruction and discipline of his pupils. He was ever a firm friend of popular education and was annually elected superintending school committee for a long period. Colonel Stimson was one of the earliest and most aggressive among the founders of the Free Soil party in this section of the state, and he was often the candidate of that party for office in town and county.

For nearly thirty years he was much in public service, holding nearly every town office, one of the last of which was to serve as the representative of the town in the constitutional convention of 1850.

Colonel Stimson married Phoebe, daughter of Pierce Burton, Esq., March 16, 1809, whom he survived a few years. They had no children. During a considerable portion of his later life he resided upon and owned the Pierce Burton farm near Norwich village, now the home of W. S. Hazen.



## DOCTOR AMOS TWITCHELL

Doctor Amos Twitchell, the famous physician and surgeon of Keene, N. H., half a century ago, began his professional life in Norwich, where he resided about three years, (1805-1808). Doctor Twitchell was born in Dublin, N. H., in 1781; graduated at Dartmouth College in 1802. He was early attracted to the medical profession and became a favorite pupil of Dr. Nathan Smith, the founder of the New Hampshire Medical Institution at Hanover. As there were four resident physicians in town at the time of Doctor Twitchell's settlement here, he made but slow headway in his profession. His charges during his first year's residence only amounted to about \$250. He was poor and involved in debt, and his letters at this time show that he was subject to seasons of deep despondency in view of his future prospects. He expressed confidence in his ability to obtain in time the largest share of the business in the vicinity, but ambition and his necessities impelled him to seek a wider field of activity. In a letter to his brother-in-law Doctor Carter, under date of May 9, 1807, he says: "I have been looking over my books. I find I am doing very poorly; some have run away; others are unable to pay; and not any of them *do* pay. Of course, I shall never be able to make remittances to my creditors, so long as I tarry here." It appears there was an improvement in his business prospects towards the end of his residence here, but not such as he thought warranted him in remaining where he must spend the prime of his life before he could attain "to anything like independence." He was employed by the town to some extent in doctoring the poor; the auditor's report in 1810 showing that he was paid a bill of \$44 for medical services.

During the time of his residence here Doctor Twitchell was devoting much time to the study and practice of anatomy, which was a passion with him for many years. The obtaining of subjects for dissection was attended with many difficulties at that time, and Doctor Twitchell's reputation for the surreptitious procurement of such material from the graveyards of the vicinage was notorious and unsavory. He is said to have been one of the most daring and adroit operators in this line while a student and in the first years of his practice. This fact and some professional jealousy towards him on his first coming

to Norwich, doubtless operated to his disadvantage in obtaining business here. He settled in Keene in 1810, and from that time till his death in May, 1850, his fame as a surgeon grew constantly till he had no superior in northern New England.

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### THE WATERMAN FAMILY

This family trace their lineage back to those of that name in Norwich, England, by the following links in the chain: Robert and Elizabeth (Bairne) Waterman; Thomas and Miriam (Tracy) Waterman; Thomas and Elizabeth (Allyne) Waterman; Daniel and Mary (Gifford) and Elizabeth (Haskell) Waterman. There are, probably, some missing links in the chain before coming to Daniel Waterman, the progenitor of the family in Norwich, Vt.

The name of Waterman is connected with the earliest days of our town's history—before a settlement was made within its borders. It was at William Waterman's tavern at Mansfield, Conn., where the first and later steps were taken towards the organization and settlement of the town, from which event we follow speedily and directly to the Daniel Waterman, already mentioned, who was a voter of record in 1767, and who married Ann Ford, to whom were born ten children, as follows: Daniel, Jr., Samuel, Elisha, Elijah, James, John, Levi (?), Ann, who married Levi Baldwin, to whom were born eleven children; Mary, who became the second wife of Jeremiah Hedges, and Elizabeth, who married Daniel G. Baker, as his second wife.

When Daniel Waterman located in Norwich, it was in the northeast part of the town (in the Pompanoosuc district) in which locality he, with others, had "proprietors' rights" of land voted them "as a consideration for first coming into town and for the burden of first settling said town."

In that section of the town later generations of the family established homes, forming quite a populous community of themselves.

The record of this family is sufficient for a long and interesting history.

## THE WRIGHT FAMILY

Aaron Wright, born in the year 1700 (probably in Hebron, Conn.), the only son of Samuel and Elizabeth Wright, came to Norwich from Preston, Conn., about 1765 and located on a hill farm, west of Norwich Plain, just south of the Deacon John Dutton farm. The property passed into the hands of Mr. Dutton some years since, and he took down the old house built by Mr. Wright.

Previous to his removal to Norwich, Mr. Wright married Elizabeth, daughter of Rev. Samuel and Elizabeth Bliss, to whom were born six sons and two daughters. Of these children, John, born in 1774, married Olive Partridge, September 27, 1768; Elizabeth married Samuel Partridge, in 1770. Samuel married (first) Eunice Ballard, (second) Polly Lane or Mary Lane. One record states that his first wife was Mary Lane, to whom he was married in 1792. It is probable that all of Mr. Wright's children were born before their parents came to Norwich.

John, son of Aaron and Elizabeth Wright, had by his wife, Olive, four sons and seven daughters—three died in infancy. Anna married Don J. Brigham; Ruby married Norman Cloud; Polly married Daniel Durkee and resided in Pennsylvania, where her husband entered into the practice of law, became a judge of one of the courts, and died at York in that state; Olive married John Hutchinson; Betsey married Elisha Hutchinson; Ebenezer, (born January 23, 1783) removed to Pennsylvania, where he became a lawyer of note and died at his home in Lancaster. Roswell, another son, born in Norwich, February 17, 1781, married Jemina Rose of Lisbon, Conn., February 20, 1803, and to them were born three children: George, Mercy R., and Olive Partridge. George graduated from the U. S. Military Academy in 1822; fought through the Mexican War, and was several times brevetted for meritorious conduct during that campaign; saw much service against the Indians; reached the rank of Brigadier General for gallant service during the War of the Rebellion. He was drowned by the sinking of the steamer Brother Jonathan off the coast of Oregon, July 30, 1865, while on his way to his post of duty. Mercy R. died in Norwich at the home of her sister, Mrs. Olive P. Newton, widow of the late Baxter B. Newton, June, 1899. Roswell Wright died October 9, 1866.

John Wright, Jr., youngest son of John and Olive Wright, was born in Norwich, June 8, 1792; graduated from the U. S. Military Academy, July 23, 1818. His first wife was Susan, a daughter of Dr. Phineas Parkhurst of Lebanon, N. H., to whom one child, Susan Ann, was born, and she became the wife of C. C. Benton, Esq., of Lebanon. Mr. Wright's second wife was Almira Kidder Green, of Putney, Vt., by whom he had five children, only three of whom reached adult age, viz.—Leonard Jarvis, Mary Jarvis, and Thomas K. G., all of whom are dead. Mr. John Wright read law after leaving the army, and established himself in his profession in his native town, becoming a prominent citizen in the community. He held several public offices: was postmaster from 1836 to 1839, and from 1853 to 1855. He died in Norwich, Sept. 10, 1860.

The tragic death of Mr. John Wright, Sr., as related by his granddaughter, Mercy Wright, to a relative of hers, is related below:

“September 10th, 1799, grandfather was preparing a piece of land for sowing grain. He came home and took dinner with his family as usual, and before leaving his house requested his second son, Ebenezer, to come with the oxen in half an hour, where he was at work, in order to remove some logs. Ebenezer went according to directions, and, although some distance, the family were alarmed by his cries. They, with the neighbors, flocked to the spot, but to witness a sad spectacle indeed. Grandfather had attempted to roll a log down a descent, and by a sudden movement had got under the log—it had rolled onto his body (across his heart) and when his son arrived life was extinct. \* \* \* \* Grandfather was fifty-six years old \* \* \* \* Grandfather was out in the Revolutionary War. He was at the battle of Bennington and the surrender of Burgoyne.”

Aaron Wright died at Norwich, in 1783, aged eighty-three years, and his wife in 1789, aged seventy-five years.

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NOTE—The spot where Mr. Wright was killed has been enclosed for many years by a picket fence. It is a short distance south of the highway following the brook westerly from near W. S. Hazen's. At the time of Mr. Wright's death it was a part of his farm, but is now owned by Charles Swasey.

## GEN. EDWARD B. WILLISTON

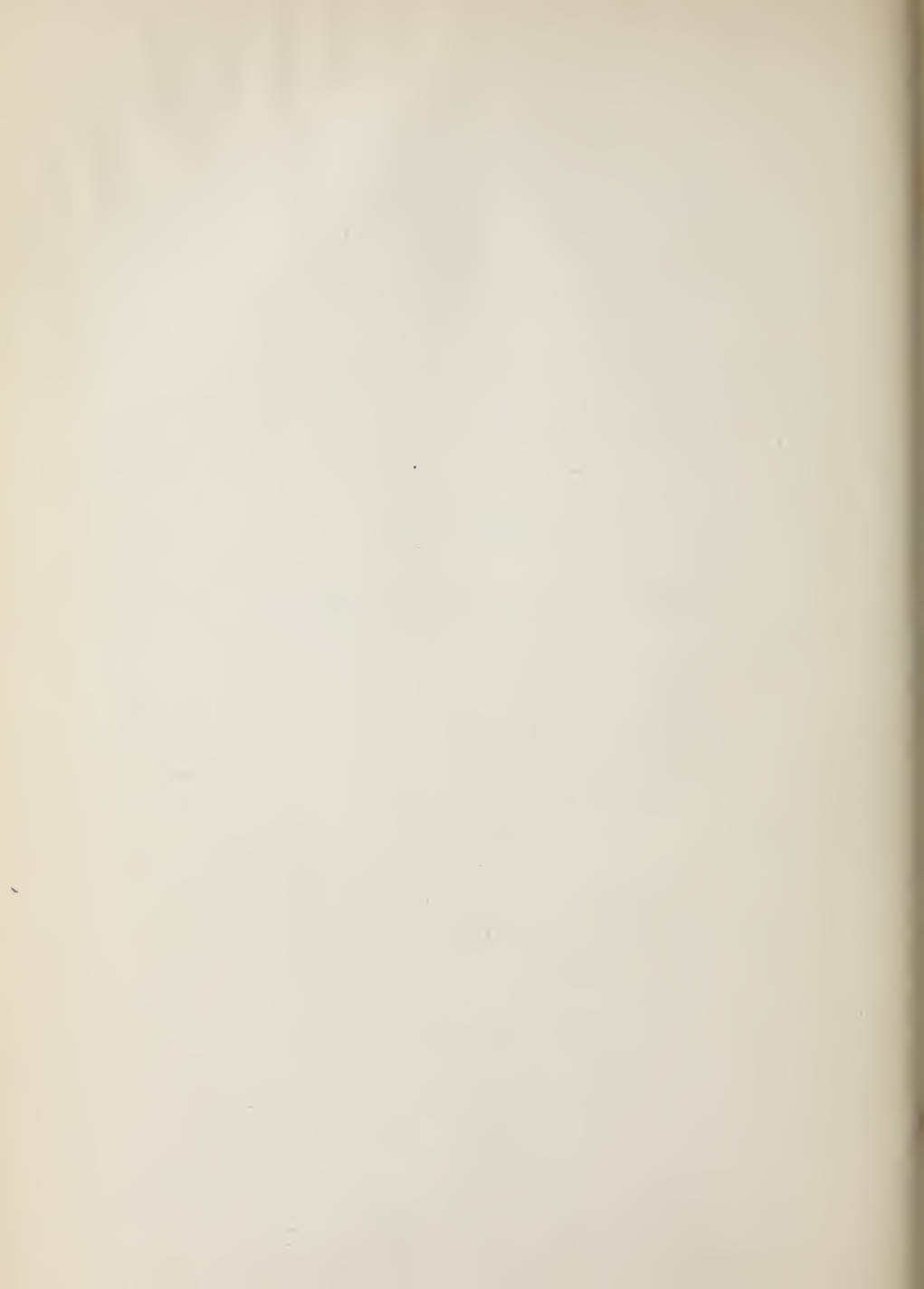
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Son of Ebenezer B. and Almira (Partridge) Williston, was born at Norwich July 15, 1836. He was four years at Norwich University previous to receiving an appointment of second lieutenant in the U. S. Artillery, August, 1861. General Williston served with distinction throughout the late Civil War, receiving several brevets for gallant conduct.

In the war with Spain he was on active duty—at one time provost-marshal at Manila. In May, 1898, he was commissioned brigadier-general. He is now assistant superintendent of the soldiers' home, Washington, D. C.



PART III  
MISCELLANEOUS



## OMPOMPANOOSUC AGRICULTURAL FAIR SOCIETY

[*By A. V. Turner*]

In the year 1885 Appleton R. Tilden became interested in the formation of an agricultural society for the purpose of holding fairs in Norwich (near Pompanoosuc), and through his efforts quite a wide interest in this scheme was awakened in Norwich, Thetford, and Hartford, Vt., and Lyme. Hanover, and Lebanon, N. H. February 6, 1886, a meeting was called in Norwich and a temporary organization formed, with J. M. Fuller president, and A. V. Turner secretary. The membership fee was fixed at \$1.00 and a committee elected to solicit membership. The meeting adjourned to February 21, at which time the committee reported that grounds suitable for fair purposes could be rented of J. H. and Sarah J. Chapman at a rental of \$25.00 per year. A membership of 177 was reported at this meeting.

At an adjourned meeting held March 6, 1886, a permanent organization was made with the following named board of officers: R. A. Tilden, President; J. M. Fuller, Secretary; A. V. Turner, Treasurer; E. M. Fullington and J. H. Chapman, Vice Presidents; Executive Committee, H. P. Flint, Jonah Taylor, A. W. Brigham; J. W. Armstrong, Marshal; N. H. Clogston, General Superintendent; Directors: Norwich, T. A. Hazen, Bartlett Sargent, Richard Waterman, G. M. Slack, A. W. Johnson, C. Strong; Hartford, David Hazen, Enos Gillett; Hanover, N. H., J. H. Foster; Lyme, N. H., A. P. Colby; Strafford, L. Parker. The Constitution and the premium list of the Tunbridge Fair Association were adopted. The Chapman grounds were leased for a long term of years and work was planned for a fair to be held in September.

During the early fall buildings and a track suitable for fair purposes were built entirely by the public spirit of the people. The first fair was set for the 20th of September. Entries in all the departments were good, but a rain storm of several days set in and the fair was

adjourned some days, but was finally held with a good attendance and fine show of stock.

Nine fairs were held by this association, all but one of which were in the midst of rainy weather, and the saying is still heard, "Pompa Fair will bring rain any time." Furthermore, the interest and work of carrying on the fairs had fallen so heavily on a "few faithful workers" that in 1895 it was deemed best to close up the business of the association, which was done by selling at auction the association property and dividing the proceeds among the few remaining members of the society. While it cost a few members weeks of hard labor and much money to help carry on the fairs, yet much good came to the agricultural interests of this town and vicinity which made their burden seem lighter.

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## OLD HOME WEEK OBSERVANCE

[*By Rev. N. R. Nichols*]

Agreeably to provisions of the laws of Vermont, citizens of Norwich assembled May 11, 1901, and organized the Norwich Old Home Week Association. The following officers were elected: H. V. Partridge, President; T. A. Hazen, 1st Vice President; G. M. Slack, 2nd Vice President; F. W. Hawley, Secretary; George Messenger, Treasurer; Executive Committee: W. S. Bowles, D. D. S., Mrs. Wm. E. Lewis, M. S. Colburn, W. O. Blood, Mrs. Jerome Brown. At a meeting June 7th by-laws were adopted and the following committees appointed: Location, E. W. Olds, A. V. Turner, Mrs. F. W. Hawley; Invitation, Mrs. William E. Lewis, Miss Sarah J. Burton, Miss Mary A. Loveland; Finance, A. W. Brigham, W. O. Blood, Dea. R. T. Lewis; Program, Mrs. W. S. Bowles, Miss Anna Converse, Miss Emma Slack; Dinner, Dea. Samuel Hutchinson, Mrs. J. H. Loveland, Mrs. E. G. Lord. It was also voted that August 16th be observed as Old Home Day.

At a meeting of the various committees July 23d, it was decided to hold the public exercises on the common. The following invitation was sent to over four hundred former residents: "The Norwich Old Home Association most cordially invites you to return and participate in the First Annual Reunion of present and former residents, Old Home

Week, August 11th to 17th, 1901, and especially to be present at the Public Exercises, Old Home Day, Norwich, Vermont, Friday, August 16th, 1901."

The day of observance was perfect. There was a general attendance of the citizens of the town, and many also came from neighboring towns, as well as from other states. In the record book may be found the names of 118 non-residents from without the state, and of ninety-five now living in Vermont, who had returned to renew their interest in their former home. It was estimated that more than a thousand people were present. Of this number some eight hundred partook of the dinner provided under the directions of the entertainment committee. The exercises of the afternoon consisted of music, addresses by non-residents and by citizens, and the reading of letters from people unable to be present. In the evening there was an open air concert by the band engaged for the occasion.

Norwich village appeared at its best. Public buildings and private dwellings were very tastefully decorated, and, in the evening, illuminated, for the occasion. Windows were everywhere ablaze with light. Much interest was added by the use of the school building as a memorial hall where were gathered numerous portraits of earlier inhabitants—representations and reminders of their sturdiness of character. So satisfactory was the outcome as to make it desirable to observe an Old Home Day the next summer. The date chosen for the occasion was the 15th of August. The celebration was carried out in a manner and with results very much like those of the preceding year. A shower, however, interfered somewhat with the full enjoyment of the exercises of the day.

Less elaborate preparations were made for the next summer. The Norwich Association, however, commemorated Old Home Week, August 21st, by a picnic on the common, to which a general invitation was extended. The three celebrations were so enjoyable, and in every way satisfactory, as fully to warrant a continued observance of Old Home Week.



## SOME INCIDENTS OF LITIGATION IN NORWICH

That the people of this town were a litigious people in the early part of the century, may well be inferred from the following statement of suits-at-law brought before Hezekiah Goodrich, Justice of the Peace, as learned from his account book:

In 1808, Daniel Buck brought 23 suits; in 1809, 11 suits.  
 In 1808, Ebenezer Brown brought 136 suits; in 1809, 218 suits.  
 In 1808, Zenas Bliss, *et al.*, brought 9 suits.

Making a total of	168	229
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Although Norwich has had the reputation during the past few years of being nearly, or quite, the banner town in the county for litigation, it has not kept pace with the above record in number of suits brought. If the law was often brought into requisition in those early days, it was at times put in action in the interest of public morals, as evidenced by the following statements:

“Norwich, June 2<sup>d</sup>, 1829.

“Edward Hutchins fined for swearing ‘By Jesus Christ,’ twice.  
 Fine, \$1.00 for each oath, \$2.00

“Cost, officer,	.34
“Court,	.67

“\$3.01”

“George W. Payne fined for swearing ‘By God,’ at 5 different times, \$1.00 ea., \$5.00

“Cost, officer,	.34
“Court,	.67

1.01

“Stand committed.

\$6.01.”

Hutchins and Payne belonged in Hanover. June 2<sup>nd</sup> (the date of the above proceedings) was the first Tuesday of that month, the time

of the Annual Militia Training (June training). The proceedings were before Don J. Brigham, Esq.

“State of Vermont, Windsor County, SS. Be it remembered that on the first day of March, 1808, George C. Freeman of Norwich, was convicted before me, H. Goodrich, Justice of the Peace, for uttering one Profane Oath on the 26<sup>th</sup> day of Feb. last in the words following, to wit: ‘By God,’ etc., and was then ordered to pay a fine of 75 cts., and 25 cts. cost.

“A true record.

“H. Goodrich, Justice Peace.”

“State of Vermont, Windsor County, SS. Be it remembered that on the 7<sup>th</sup> day of September, A. D. 1809, Calvin Miner of Hartford, in the county of Windsor, was convicted of horse racing in Norwich in the county aforesaid, on the 31<sup>st</sup> day of July last past, and winning the sum of \$9.50, and was ordered to pay the same into the treasury of sd. Norwich, with \$4.00 fine and \$2.71 cost.

“A true record, Attest

“Hez<sup>h</sup> Goodrich, Just. Peace.”

## NORWICH WEARS THE BELL

By FAIRBANKS BUSH.

Come ye who love the truth, give ear to what I say!

Although it is in poetry, the truth I will convey :  
I'll tell you our condition—I think I know it well,

And then with me you will agree that Norwich wears the bell.

This town to me was dear, it was my place of birth,

'T was here I was conceived and drew my natal breath :  
It was a pleasant land to me, and I am bold to tell,

For in those days we had much praise, and likewise wore the bell.

Our fathers all were friends, in wealth they did abound,

Their object was to live in peace and cultivate the ground :  
In this they were successful,—in harmony did dwell,

And we can say there was a day that Norwich wore the bell.

Alas, how great the change! the gold it has turned dim,  
We left the path our fathers chose, and do not dwell therein;  
Our name is sounding far and wide, but this I'm loath to tell,  
For it is told by young and old, that Norwich wears the bell.

When I relate this truth my heart is filled with pain;  
Those happy days which we have spent will ne'er return again;  
Instead of love and friendship, contention here doth dwell,  
And it is known by this my moan that Norwich wears the bell.

The town is now deranged—this is the state of things:  
Our leaders are unskillful men, and cannot tune her strings:  
They vibrate loud in discord, the sound is sharp and shrill,  
There's none I see but what agree that Norwich wears the bell.

Our rulers they are wise—yes, in their own conceit,  
They think the common class all fools, but *they* will lie and cheat:  
Some things would make you wonder, but those I dare not tell,  
It would disgrace the human race, and Norwich wears the bell.

These evils which prevail are numerous and great,  
Likewise they have increased abundantly of late;  
Some things are now in practice which I'm ashamed to tell,  
That teaches all, both great and small, that Norwich wears the bell.

The law is our delight, and courts they do abound,  
We've almost twenty magistrates, but justice can't be found:  
Our debts are so increased we cannot pay them well,  
And for want of bail we go to jail, and Norwich wears the bell.

The men who guard our rights are those who love their ease.  
They show much zeal for virtue's cause, but twice as much for fees:  
They'll sign a writ for any sum, and execution fill,  
And this is done by every one, and Norwich wears the bell.

There's some profess the law,—they say they guard our rights,—  
To rob us of our property they strive with all their might:  
This is their calculation, we all do know it well,  
By this you see we all agree that Norwich wears the bell.

There's some that sell us goods,—their object is their pay,—  
They strip us of our hogs and pigs, our corn, our oats, our hay :  
And this is sold at auction,—I think it pays them well,—  
And now with me you must agree that Norwich wears the bell.

There's some in horses trade,—they say it is no hurt,—  
The calling is as honorable as any other work ;  
Our jockeys trade so fairly they all do make it well :  
They cheer the heart before they part, and Norwich wears the bell.

There's some boarding out to learn a useful trade,  
And Windsor is their residence,—it is the choice they've made,—  
And others stand propounded, and we can spare them well,  
We have in store a number more, and Norwich wears the bell.

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## THE LIBERTY TREE

By FAIRBANKS BUSH.

Our fathers of old, by oppression we're told,  
Were forced to cross the wide sea ;  
They came to this land, tho' a small, feeble band,  
And they planted a Liberty Tree.

This tree grew so tall (yet its branches were small)  
The nations of Europe did see :  
Then Britain engaged, with her forces enraged,  
To pluck up this Liberty Tree.

It pleased our God to oppose Britain's rod,  
And show their attempts all in vain ;  
This tree here must stand till it spreads o'er the land,  
And its branches shoot over the main.

This tree while ascending the gods were defending,  
And turning all envy to shame ;—  
The men of corruption who plot its destruction,  
All true-hearted men do disdain,

We have some British tools that may well be styl'd fools,  
They would give up our freedom for gain;  
They would plunge the whole nation without hesitation  
In bondage and slavery's chains.

They would give up our claim to honor and fame,  
They would banish our flag from the sea;  
If they had but the power they would crop the gay flower,  
And would cut down this Liberty Tree.

But woe to the man that with Britain doth plan  
Against his own country's cause,  
Working every invention to stir up contention,  
And censure our rulers and laws.

Though tories combine in a wretched design,  
And foreigners with them agree,  
In a garb of disguise for to blind freemen's eyes,  
While they cut down this Liberty Tree;

Though Britain may boast of a brave gallant host,  
Her power is confined to the sea;  
The sons of our land will soon weaken her hand,  
When aimed at this Liberty Tree.

Then let them all strive in their plans of disguise,  
They can't sap the least twig or a branch:  
We have nothing to fear from the British career,  
Nor the threats of that tyrant of France.

For America's ground still echoes the sound—  
Our rights we'll defend and be free;  
In one solid band we will march hand in hand,  
And support this fair Liberty Tree.

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\*This song was composed and sung by Mr. Bush on the occasion of the erection of a liberty pole (Liberty Tree) and flag-raising, which was largely attended, on the grounds near the old First Meetinghouse, in Norwich, in the summer or early fall of 1812. This was shortly after the declaration of war with Great Britain, and while the war feeling was at fever heat.



## NORWICH CHRONOLOGY

- 1761 (July 4.) The Charter of the town granted by Benning Wentworth, royal governor of New Hampshire. (Hartford, Hanover, and Lebanon chartered the same day.) The Grantees of Norwich hold their first meeting (Aug. 26) at the Inn of Wm. Waterman in Mansfield, Conn.
- 1762 A portion of the township laid off into lots by a committee of the grantees.
- 1763 The Grantees of Norwich unite with those of Hanover, Lebanon, and Hartford in "clearing a road from the old fort in Number Four (Charlestown, N. H.), to the middle of the town of Hanover." Jacob Fenton, Ebenezer Smith and John Slafter, from Mansfield, Ct., begin to make clearings on the meadows below the mouth of Pompa river. Death of Mr. Fenton from accidental injuries (July 15, 1763), aged sixty-five years.
- 1765 (March) Committee of five chosen by the grantees "to lay out roads for convenience of settling said township."
- 1765-6 The families of Nathan Messenger and John Hutchinson (from Ashford, Conn.), the first to pass the winter in town—occupying a hut on the flat near the west end of Hanover bridge. Jacob Burton built his first dwelling house a little west of the present Azro Turner house.
- 1766 First emigration of permanent settlers (10 or 12 families). Jacob Burton builds the first saw mill a little west of Norwich Plain, on Blood Brook.
- 1767 The first child (Lydia Hutchinson) born in town (Oct. 6), and the second male child (Joel Richards), born (Nov. 26). It is believed that John Waterman, son of Daniel Waterman, was the first male child born in town. Date of birth not known. Samuel Hutchinson erected a barn on his farm.
- 1768 A Court of Confiscation sat in town.  
The first town meeting held within the limits of the town, at the house of Joseph Hatch, on the second Tuesday in March. This house stood on the opposite side of the street from the present Erastus Messenger house.

- 1805 A postoffice established at Norwich Plain, July 1.
- 1807 Turnpike road to Chelsea laid through the town. The funds of Windsor County Grammar school transferred to Royalton Academy.
- 1809 Hon. Daniel Buck removes to Chelsea, where he dies in 1816.
- 1810 The feeling in favor of war with Great Britain runs high in town.
- 1815 The war continues popular to the end. The Methodists build their first meeting-house. Rapid growth of this sect in the northern and western portions of the town.
- 1817 Differences as to the location of a new meeting-house result in the building of two meeting-houses this year. The church building at the village dedicated November 20, and the north meeting-house the 1st of the following January. President Monroe, in his tour through New England, visits Norwich and is formally received by the citizens at the Norwich Hotel.
- 1819 Death of Elisha Burton, Esq. Rev. R. W. Bailey settled over the church at Norwich Plain.
- 1820 Capt. Alden Partridge opens his Military Academy at Norwich. Lieut. Gov. Paul Brigham declines re-election after 22 years' service.
- 1822 Rev. Samuel Goddard settled in the north parish. Death of Hon. Ebenezer Brown.
- 1825 Captain Partridge removes his Military Academy to Middletown, Ct. Death of Hon. Paul Brigham.
- 1825-35 Height of the prosperity of the North Congregational Society.
- 1826 Baptist Church formed at Beaver Meadow.
- 1827 First organized Temperance Society (in the north parish).
- 1829 Hon. Thomas Emerson removes to Windsor, to become president of the bank there. Freshet carries away bridge and grist mill at Gleason's Flats.
- 1830 The census of this year shows a population of 2316—the maximum number ever reached. Number of children of school age, 774. Captain Partridge returns to Norwich and erects a second school building. Postoffice opened at Union Village (January 1).

- 1833 Baptist meeting-house built at Beaver Meadow. Death of Dr. Joseph Lewis.
- 1834 School district No. 20 organized.
- 1835 Norwich University established. An Episcopal church organized.
- 1836 The Methodists build a new brick meeting-house at Union Village.
- 1837 Methodist meeting-house at Beaver Meadow erected.
- 1839 The third toll-bridge between Norwich and Hanover built. Congregational vestry building, at Norwich Village, built at a cost of \$700.
- 1840 The Whigs achieve a temporary victory, and elect Judge Loveland to the legislature. *Tithing-men* and *haywards* no longer elected at the annual town meeting. The town purchases its first poor farm of Nathaniel Leavitt.
- 1841 (Nov. 1) James Sweney murdered his wife.
- 1842-3 Erysipelas prevails in town and is very fatal.
- 1842 Culmination of the "hard times" following the financial collapse of 1837. Nearly \$1,000 of *uncollected taxes* on the lists of 1840 and 1841.
- 1843 Capt. Partridge resigns the presidency of Norwich University, and is succeeded by Col. T. B. Ransom. Ex-Vice President of the United States, Richard M. Johnson, the guest of the town and is treated to a barbecue (Oct. 25).
- 1844 Death of Rev. Samuel Goddard. Two disastrous freshets, one in September did great damage in the north and west parts of the town; and one in October carried away every bridge between Amsden's mill and the head of Blood Brook.
- 1847 Col. Ransom in command of the New England Regiment (9th Infantry) sails for Mexico (May 1). He is killed at Chapultepec, Mexico, at the head of a charging column (September 13).
- 1848 The funeral of Col. Ransom at Norwich (February 22) attended with military honors. The largest assemblage of people ever seen here. The Passumpsic Railroad completed through town. Postoffice established at Pompanoosuc.
- 1859 Printed annual reports of town officers first provided for.
- 1851 Dr. Edward Bourne president of Norwich University.

- 1852 After holding town and freemen's meetings for ten years at the village, they are resumed at the old Center meeting-house for a few years.
- 1853 The town votes in February, 177 to 104, *not* to ratify the Prohibitory Liquor Law enacted by the Vermont legislature of 1852. The last toll-bridge between Norwich and Hanover destroyed by fire.
- 1854 Sunday services discontinued in the north parish. Dissolution of the North Congregational church. Death of Captain Alden Partridge. Formation of the Republican party. End of the Democratic supremacy in town.
- 1857 The second meeting-house erected at the "Center," sold at auction to Chas. A. and G. M. Slack for \$100.
- 1858 All town meetings held at the village from this date.
- 1859 The Ledyard Free Bridge between Norwich and Hanover opened to public travel. (The first *free bridge* on Connecticut river).
- 1861 The first volunteers for the war from Norwich (eight men) enlist (June 1) in Company C (Captain David T. Corbin), 3rd Regiment Vermont Volunteers. Gratuities to volunteers paid by Henry Blood, Esq.
- 1863 An Episcopal church built at the village.
- 1865 Total amount of war expenses, \$32,260. Amount of town debt reported (March) \$27,169.
- 1866 The "South Barracks" building of Norwich University burned (March 13). Removal of the institution to Northfield the following autumn.
- 1837 The Norwich Classical and English Boarding School opened (December). Death of Dr. Shubael Converse.
- 1838 Death of Hon. Harvey Burton.
- 1869 Great freshet, Oct. 4, damaging roads and bridges to the amount of \$4,000 to \$5,000 in town, besides extensive injury to private property. President U. S. Grant on his way from the White Mountains, received at Norwich and Hanover depot by a large concourse of people.
- 1870 Death of Hon. Aaron Loveland.

- 1873 Death of Fairbanks Bush, aged 100 years. Death of Dr. Ira Davis.
- 1875 The "Old Corner Store" at Norwich village consumed by fire (August 4). The Baptist meeting-house at West Norwich demolished and removed to Sharon village.
- 1878 The Norwich Classical and English boarding school extinct.
- 1880 The Norwich Public Library established (December). Number of children of school age (between five and twenty), 391.
- 1883 The town (war) debt extinguished.
- 1889 Union Hotel and connecting buildings destroyed by fire (Dec. 29).
- 1890 "The Newton Inn" erected by Dr. W. S. Bowles.
- 1892 Ames' steam mill burned in August; rebuilt and again destroyed by fire, October, 1893.
- 1895 Joseph Murdock committed suicide, Nov. 29, by hanging himself to a tree in his garden. Vandals removed his body from the grave; were prosecuted and forced to pay heavy fines.
- 1897 Academy building, formerly the north building of Norwich University, destroyed by fire, October 13.
- 1898 School building, Norwich village, erected.
- 1899 Robert Emerton killed by S. A. Bugbee.
- 1901 First observance of Old Home Week, Aug. 16.
- 1904 Harry Cooley, a child, run over and killed by a team near the bridge south of the railroad station.

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## TOWN OFFICERS

### I. WHILE AN INDEPENDENT TOWNSHIP

YEAR	FIRST SELECTMAN	FIRST CONSTABLE	TOWN CLERK
1761	Samuel West	Andrew Crocker	Eleazar Wales
1762	Abner Barker	"	"
1763	"	(None on record)	Moses Holmes
1764	Andrew Crocker	"	Eleazar Wales
1765	Jacob Burton	Samuel Fenton	Barnabus Delano
1766	William Johnson	John Slafter	"
1767	Peter Thatcher	Medad Benton	Hezekiah Johnson
1768	Samuel Partridge	"	Thomas Murdock
1769	Thomas Murdock	"	John Hatch



1770	*Hezekiah Johnson	John Slafter	"
1771	*Joseph Smalley	Francis Smalley	"
1772	*Jacob Burton	John Hopson	"
1773	*Samuel Hutchinson	(Town elected trustees)	"
1774	*Peter Olcott	"	"
1775	"	"	"
1776	Joseph Smalley	"	Peter Olcott
1777	Peter Olcott	Elijah Gates	John Hatch
	*Supervisors		

## 2. UNDER VT. STATE GOVERNMENT

YEAR	FIRST SELECTMAN	FIRST CONSTABLE	REPRESENTATIVES
1778	Peter Olcott	Elijah Gates	*Jacob Burton, Mch. Ses. Abel Curtis } Octobe Joseph Hatch } Session

\*Peter Olcott and Thomas Murdock were elected Representatives to the General Assembly in March, but on the convening of the legislature were each found to be chosen to the Council. They accordingly took their seats in that body. In September following, Messrs. Curtis and Hatch were chosen to the Assembly. In the meantime Jacob Burton appears to have served, either by special appointment in the vacancy, or from consent by reason of having sat in the conventions of the preceding year. The Assembly Journal shows that Mr. Burton was appointed one of a committee on the second day of the March session, to draw up rules for the regulation of the Assembly. Until 1785, every town containing eighty taxable inhabitants was allowed by a provision of the constitution, to send two representatives.

1779	Nathaniel Brown	Asa Story	Unrepresented
1780	Hezekiah Johnson	Solomon Cushman	Thomas Murdock Elisha Burton
1781	Abel Curtis	James Smalley	Abel Curtis Elisha Burton
1782	"	Benjamin Hatch	Abel Curtis Thomas Murdock
1783	Elijah Gates	Elisha Burton	Elisha Burton *Paul Brigham

\*Abel Curtis died Oct. 1, 1783, when member elect. Paul Brigham was chosen to his place at a special town meeting held for that purpose a few days after the assembling of the legislature.

1784	Samuel Waterman	John Wright	Elisha Burton Elijah Gates
1785	Joseph Hatch	Hezekiah Goodrich	Jacob Burton
1786	William Lewis	Joseph Bartlett	Paul Brigham
1787	"	Asa Story	Elisha Burton
1788	"	Adrian Hatch	"
1789	"	Calvin Seaver	"
1790	Thomas Murdock	Roswell Olcott	Joseph Hatch
1791	Daniel Buck	"	Paul Brigham

1792	William Lewis	Pierce Burton	Aaron Storrs
1793	"	"	Daniel Buck
1794	Hezekiah Goodrich	"	"
1795	William Lewis	Jehiel Boardman	John Bush
1796	"	"	Ebenezer Brown
1797	John Slafter	"	Roswell Olcott
1798	Pierce Burton	Peter Thatcher	"
1799	Elisha Burton	"	Elisha Burton
1800	"	John Burton	"
1801	"	"	Peter Olcott
1802	Pierce Burton	Elijah Yemans, Jr.	Pierce Burton
1803	"	Don J. Brigham	Hezekiah Goodrich
1804	Ebenezer Brown	"	"
1805	Samuel Waterman	John Brown	Pierce Burton
1806	Ebenezer Brown	"	Daniel Buck
1807	Hezekiah Goodrich	"	"
1808	Constant Murdock	"	Joseph Lewis
1809	Daniel G. Baker	"	Pierce Burton
1810	Joseph Howes	"	"
1811	"	"	"
1812	Jesse Stoddard	Simon Baldwin	"
1813	Joseph Howes	John Brown	"
1814	Pierce Burton	"	Israel Newton
1815	"	"	Don J. Brigham
1816	Don J. Brigham	"	"
1817	"	"	"
1818	Pierce Burton	Edmond C. Hovey	"
1819	Don J. Brigham	"	"
1820	"	"	Aaron Loveland
1821	Calvin Seaver	"	"
1822	John Emerson	"	"
1823	John Brown	Elisha Partridge	"
1824	Thomas Emerson	Chauncey Hunt	Thomas Emerson
1825	"	Edmond C. Hovey	"
1826	"	Levi Sanborn	"
1827	Ethan Burnap	Edmond C. Hovey	"
1828	Alba Stimson	"	"
1829	Alba Stimson	David Freeman	Cyrus Partridge
1830	"	"	Elias Lyman, Jr.
1831	"	Ebenezer B. Brown	"
1832	Elias Lyman	"	"
1833	Don J. Brigham	"	Alden Partridge
1834	James Harrison	"	"
1835	Cyrus Partridge	"	Cyrus Partridge
1836	"	"	"
1837	"	"	Alden Partridge
1838	"	"	Thomas Hazen
1839	"	"	Alden Partridge
1840	John Wright	William E. Lewis	Aaron Loveland

1841	William Loveland	William E. Lewis	Ira Davis
1842	Ebenezar B. Brown	"	"
1843	John Wright	Samuel Wright	"
1844	"	"	Ebenezar Spear, 2nd
1845	Joseph P. Wyatt	"	Shubael Converse
1846	"	"	"
1847	Isaac Pierce	"	William Loveland
1848	Alba Stimson	"	No election
1849	"	"	Ebenezar Spear, 2nd
1850	William E. Lewis	"	Ebenezar B. Brown
1851	"	Charles Hatch	Samuel Goddard
1852	"	Ezekiel Gile	Lewis S. Partridge
1853	"	"	"
1854	Elias Newton	William E. Lewis	Franklin L. Olds
1855	"	"	"
1856	"	"	William E. Lewis
1857	"	"	"
1858	John W. Loveland	"	Joseph T. Loveland
1859	Eber N. Clark	"	"
1860	Frederick W. Strong	"	John W. Loveland
1861	Eber N. Clark	"	"
1862	Joseph H. Pratt	"	Joseph II. Pratt
1863	John W. Loveland	"	William E. Lewis
1864	"	"	Aaron G. Pease
1865	"	John A. Sargent	"
1866	Shubael Converse	John W. Armstrong	Joseph T. Loveland
1867	"	Don A. Brigham	"
1868	Edward M. Lewis	Samuel A. Armstrong	Ebenezar B. Brown
1869	Ebenezar B. Brown	"	"
1870	Edward M. Lewis	"	No election
1871	"	"	"
1872	John W. Loveland	"	William E. Lewis
1873	Augustus C. Lyman	"	"
1874	Charles C. Sawyer	"	John Dutton
1875	"	"	"
1876	David A. Loveland	Charles E. Ensworth	Bartlett Sargent
1877	Bartlett Sargent	Samuel A. Armstrong	"
1878	Henry Hutchinson	"	William E. Lewis
1879	Richard Waterman	"	"
1880	John W. Loveland	"	Samuel H. Currier
1881	Amberg V. Turner	"	"
1882	"	"	Henry V. Partridge
1883	"	"	"
1884	George Messenger	"	Amberg V. Turner
1885	Bartlett Sargent	"	"
1886	Amberg V. Turner	"	George Messenger
1887	"	"	"
1888	John A. Sargent	"	Aaron Loveland
1889	R. E. Cook	"	"





NORWICH PUBLIC LIBRARY



1890	Sam'l Hutchinson	Samuel A. Armstrong	W. H. Clogston
1891	A. V. Turner	J. W. Armstrong	
1892	T. A. Hazen	"	David A. Loveland
1893	J. W. Hutchinson	"	
1894	A. V. Turner	"	Sam'l Hutchinson
1895	C. W. Brown	"	
1896	"	R. E. Cook	E. W. Olds
1897	H. S. Goddard	"	
1898	C. W. Brown	"	R. T. Lewis
1899	"	"	
1900	"	"	"
1901	"	M. W. Bruce	
1901	"	"	Hersey E. Kendall
1903	F. S. Nott	F. A. Fitzgerald	
1904	"	"	R. A. Tilden

## THE NORWICH PUBLIC LIBRARY

The Norwich Public Library Association was organized in December, 1880, with the following officers : J. G. Stimson, President ; Thos. A. Hazen, Vice President ; William H. Currier, Secretary ; Mrs. E. W. Olds, Librarian ; William E. Lewis, Treasurer ; and M. E. Goddard, Miss Sarah J. Burton, and Rev. N. R. Nichols, Trustees. At first the books of the library were kept in the upper rooms of the vestry in Norwich village ; then removed to the Academy building, where they remained until fire destroyed that structure, October 5, 1897 ; thence to the James Hutchinson house on Main Street, whence they were removed to their present new home further up the street.

Before the erection of the library building, a subscription paper was put into circulation, both at home and abroad, which returned in due time with sufficient encouragement to warrant the project of building.

A contract was soon made with E. F. Phelps of Lebanon, N. H., and on the 10th day of September, 1901, the first removal of earth for the foundation of the structure was made. The building was finished on the 22d of the following February, ready to be turned over to the Trustees of the association. The following account of the dedicatory exercises was kindly prepared by Miss Mary Loveland :

"Norwich Library is a dedicated reality—on the afternoon of February 26, 1902, a goodly company gathered in the Congregational

Church to listen to interesting and instructive dedicatory exercises. Two from Dartmouth College, Prof. C. F. Richardson and Prof. Justin H. Smith, talked about the influence of books on a community, and small libraries. Professor Richardson, with many other helpful suggestions, gave one he wished remembered, if the rest were forgotten : to read, on an average, one book each fortnight.

“ Professor Smith, a former resident of the town, before telling of small libraries of great men, gave an account of the ‘ Prehistoric Age ’ of the Norwich Library — a movement among some of the boys which secured books that were later turned over to this association. It may be stated that the Young Men’s Christian Association had books which were handed down. Mr. H. V. Partridge was the historian of the library, and Mr. H. B. Olds urged town loyalty upon the residents. E. F. Phelps of Lebanon, the contractor, formally presented the keys, which were received by Rev. N. R. Nichols, one of the Trustees, who also gave a financial statement rendered by Miss S. J. Burton, and offered prayer. The church choir furnished two anthems for the occasion.”

The success of this enterprise in all ways ; in the amount of good literature upon its shelves, its continued and increasing patronage by the lovers of good reading matter, and in the well arranged and attractive structure provided for its home, is highly gratifying to its friends. While enjoying this pleasing condition of affairs, let us not forget the sources of the means to provide all this. With no lessening appreciation of what others have done, stern duty—to which we all render ready obedience in this instance—requires that we never forget the long and unceasing efforts so cheerfully rendered by Miss Sarah J. Burton and by the late M. E. Goddard, in creating and advancing this pleasant educational undertaking.

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